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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Third periodic reports of States parties

Israel*

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
For the initial and second periodic reports submitted by the Government of Israel, see CEDAW/C/ISR/1-2, which was considered by the Committee at its seventeenth session.

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Israel is pleased to submit its Third Periodic Report Concerning the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. This Report describes the developments that took place since the submission of the Combined Initial and Second Report in 1997, taking into account the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations as well as the General Recommendations adopted by the CEDAW Committee. In line with the reporting guidelines, this Report builds upon and continues the previous one. Accordingly, it refrains from repeating previous information and explanations, and only refers to them whenever necessary (For further reading, we recommend Israel's periodic Reports to the ICESCR, ICCPR, CRC, CAT, and CERD). As was done with the previous Report, non-governmental organizations were consulted prior to the writing of this Report, and their contributions were given substantial consideration.

The general constitution of the Report is one of continuing gradual progress, although it may sometimes appear to be a slow one. The legislative sphere continues to advance in impressive measures, while its implementation sometimes takes longer to catch up. An important machinery introduced in 1998 in line with the Committee's recommendations, the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women, will hopefully strengthen this sphere as well.
In keeping with the reporting guidelines calling for the specific address of issues raised in the Beijing Platform for Action, a separate section was added on the Girl-Child, as it was felt that while most of the other areas that the Platform for Action dealt with were already covered in the Report, this specific gender perspective deserved a more thorough treatment. Furthermore, two additional themes are introduced in the Report: Women with disabilities, and Jewish women immigrant from Ethiopia.

Also, as done in the previous Report, a legislative supplement is included, containing the most significant new legislation in this field, all of which is discussed throughout the Report.

The Report was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and prepared by Dr. ruth Halperin- Kaddari, under the auspices of the Ruth and Emanuel Rackman International Center for the Advancement of Women at Bar Ilan University Faculty of Law. The project was coordinated by Ms. Atara Kenigsberg, Adv. Special thanks are also due to Mr. Eric Lifschitz, Adv., Ms. Irit Hermell for their invaluable input, and for Mr. Jean-Marc Liling, and Ms. Rachel Shakerdge.

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Article 1

Definition of Discrimination Against Women

1. The Constitutional Level

As explained in the previous Report, while the right to equality is not explicitly included in the two Basic Laws enacted in 1992 (**Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty; Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation**), the common opinion, led by Chief Justice Barak, is that the scope of the basic right to human dignity is very broad and encompasses various unenumerated human rights, such as the right to equality. This interpretation was approved in a number of Supreme Court cases. Moreover, many jurists in Israel, Chief Justice Barak central among them, regard these basic laws as establishing a constitution, and as empowering the courts to exercise judicial review. This analysis was approved and was recently implemented by the Supreme Court on two separate occasions, in the cases of *Chambers of Investment Managers in Israel v. The Minister of Treasure* and *Sagi Tzemach et al. v. Minister of Defense*. In other words, courts now indeed have the power to strike down legislation that violates the basic rights guaranteed by the two Basic Laws, and which does not fulfill the requirements of the limitations clause in those laws. In any case, however, legislation that existed prior to 1992 is immune from any kind of review, and is subject only to interpretation, which accommodates the Basic Laws.

These two developments, namely the labeling of the right to equality as a basic right guaranteed by **Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty** and the implementation of judicial review, could have a profound implication on the issue of gender based discrimination, as future legislation that violates the right to equality could be struck down (see previous Report).

2. Equal Rights Legislation

Several significant developments took place on the legislative level since the previous Report. First and foremost, in terms of norms-setting legislation, the **Women's Equal Rights Law – 1951** has undergone a substantial reform in its jubilee year. The 2000 amendment was introduced after two years of deliberations, and while it did not repeal the exclusionary rule regarding license and prohibitions in marriage and divorce, it does represent an almost complete revision of the 1951 law. The full text of the amended law is attached in the Legislative Supplement. In a nutshell, the amendment starts with a declaration of the law's intention to ensure total gender equality and women's advancement in all areas of the state, the society, the economy and the family and goes on to prohibit all forms of discrimination against women, whether intentional or *de facto*. It then proceeds with the guarantee of substantive equality, including through affirmative action, and explicitly relates to equality in human dignity, including the delineation of social rights. It expressly ensures a woman's right over her body and provides for protection from violence, sexual harassment, sexual abuse and trafficking. The amendment also includes a broad provision of adequate representation in public bodies, and concludes with a provision of equal service in security forces. Many of the provisions, such as the protection from violence and sexual harassment, are reiterations of already existing legal norms (as explained below regarding the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law – 1998**). Some, such as the mandate for adequate representation or for affirmative action, are an expansion of existing norms, and some present completely novel rights. Such is for example, the guarantee of a woman's right over her body, which clearly implicates the issue of reproductive freedom.

While the amended **Women's Equal Rights Law** may represent the most significant legislative development on the level of the principle of gender equality, several other legislative developments may prove to supercede its significance for women's every-day reality on the practical level. Such is the **Authority for the Advancement of Women Law – 1998** which has established the anticipated national authority whose significance cannot be underestimated, as indeed mentioned in the previous Report and in the Committee's Concluding Comments, urging the passage of the **Authority for the Advancement of Women Bill – 1996**. The text of the law is found in the Legislative Supplement, and its main provisions are detailed under Article 2 below.

Beyond the authority for advancement of women law which expresses concrete national commitment to secure women's rights and eliminate any gender discrimination in a systematic manner, through a national institution, the following pieces of legislation, which are all detailed throughout this Report and are found in the legislative supplement, requires mentioning, should be noted here as well, since they, taken all together, reflect a picture of comprehensive efforts to advance women in all aspects of their lives. These include, among others, the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law – 1998;** the 1998 and 2000 amendments to the **Penal Law – 1977** relating to sexual offences, pornography, and trafficking; the **Local**

Councils Law (Advisor on the Status of Women) - 2000; the 1998 amendment to the **Corporate Ordinance** (recently replaced by a similar section in the 1999 Corporate Law) and several others.

3. Judicial Development of the Right to Equality

The judiciary has continued its contribution to the development of the right to equality in general, and of gender equality in particular. The principle of gender equality has been reiterated in many cases and has served for further implementation of the progressive equal rights legislation. In terms of norms-setting, the most significant case has been the case of *The Israel Women's Network* v. *The Minister of Labor and Welfare et al.*, detailed under article 4 below, which has set a new norm by holding that expansive affirmative action is required in public bodies' employment policies even where there is no statutory provision to that effect. This constitutes further expansion of the concept of substantive equality required by the Convention.

4. The Elimination of Discrimination in the Private Sphere

The legislative provisions of discrimination against women all apply to the private as well as the public sphere.

Furthermore the requirement of fair representation for women in public institutions has been to the private sector by section 239(d) of the **Corporate Law - 1999**, which mandates that one of the directors appointed as public representatives in every public corporation should be a woman, if there are no other women on the board of directors.

Article 2

Obligations to Eliminate Discrimination

1. Legal Provisions

Since the submission of the Combined Initial and Second Report (herein - the previous report), Israel has enacted several pieces of legislation aimed at eliminating discrimination against women. Indeed, the fourteenth Knesset (1996-9) saw the legislation of 16 laws pertaining to the advancement of women. Among the most important laws recently adopted is the **Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women Law - 1998**, which the CEDAW committee in its concluding comments has urged Israel to adopt. Other significant laws are the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law - 1998**, the **Local Councils Law (Advisor on the Status of Women) - 2000** and the 2000 amendment to the **Equal Rights for Women Law - 1951**. These laws and others will be detailed in the appropriate chapters below.

2. Legal Recourse Available for the Pursuit of Women's Rights

The **Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women Law - 1998** has established a statutory Authority for the Advancement of Women which replaced the narrower mechanism of the Prime Minister's Advisor on the Status of Women. The Authority is vested with advisory powers and may suggest policies to the government designed to advance the status of women, promote gender equality, eliminate discrimination against women and prevent domestic violence targeted against women. In addition, the Authority supervises the gender policies of the different governmental bodies. The functions of the Authority are detailed below.

Despite its central role, the new Authority has not undermined the importance of other establishments and institutions working for the promotion of women's rights and status, rather, it concentrates on coordinating and managing cooperation between all existing organizations. It must be noted that the Authority lacks the power to handle direct complaints emanating from the public. Nevertheless, the Authority does receive dozens of complaints directly from the public, which it refers to the appropriate establishments for further handling.

The prime office for handling complaints and grievances from the public, including women's complaints remains the Public Complaints Commissioner. Recent data indicates that of the approximately 6,400 complaints to the Public Complaints Commissioner between September 1999 and September 2000, 1,249 were submitted by women (not necessarily relating to women's issues). 16 of these complaints dealt with various social benefits, such as alimony payments, maternity grant, birth allowance and high-risk pregnancy grant; 2 other complaints dealt with the unlawful dismissal of pregnant employees.

In addition, other governmental bodies - such as the Ministry of Labor's Division for Employment and Status of Women, the Labor Courts system, the Superintendent over Discipline in the Civil Service and the General Supervisor on the Advancement of Women in the Civil Service - as well as various Women's NGO's are still available for women who seek legal recourse.

3. Governmental Machineries, Mechanisms and Measures Established to Promote the Status of Women

3.1. Investigative and Study Initiatives by the Government

The past few years have seen several governmental investigative initiatives, focusing on specific issues such as domestic violence and women in the civil service. Indeed, as detailed under Article 5, both the Parliamentary Investigative Committee on the Murder of Women by their Spouses and an Inter-Ministerial Committee on domestic violence operated in 1998-9. Within the civil service, as detailed under article 11, a special research was carried out to examine gender salary gaps in 1999, in addition to its regular annual report on the status of women within the civil service.

3.2 Mechanisms Implemented for the Improvement of the Status of Women

3.2.1 The Authority for the Advancement of Women in Israel

As mentioned in the previous report, the establishment of the Authority for the Advancement of Women was a long-awaited development. The functions of the Authority, as put forward in section 5 of the **Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women Law - 1998**, are as follows:

1) Coordinating and promoting cooperation between state government, municipalities and others in the area of women's status;

2) To monitor and follow-up the activities of the various government offices which relate to the topics which have been assigned to the Authority;

3) Advising the ministries on the implementation of laws relating to the Authority's jurisdiction;

4) Ensuring that the recommendations of the State Comptroller on these issues will be implemented;

5) To deepen the public awareness, which includes the educational system and the media, of the topics it oversees;

6) The formulation of policy regarding gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women;

7) To act as an information center as well as initiate researches on topics which it oversees;

8) The establishment of special programs and services for women which promote gender equality;

9) To promote the implementation of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination against Women;

10) To prepare the official periodic reports due according to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination against Women;

11) To initiate and maintain ties with international organizations and organizations in other countries which deal with the same topics.

Note that all these functions are in conformity with the committee's concluding comments to the previous Report.

The Head of the Authority is to be appointed by the government, based upon the Prime-Minister's recommendation, and will be aided by a staff and an advisory committee, to be comprised of 35 members from various government offices and organizations, including representatives from women's organizations and academia. A nine-member board will be selected from among the advisory committee to work in close cooperation with the Head of the Authority.

Currently, some of the activities and programs initiated by the Authority include:

1) The enforcement of laws relating to women's rights in the workplace, including equal pay, equal opportunities, prevention of discrimination, as well as shattering of the "glass ceiling". In this area, the Authority plans the future establishment of a mechanism for the supervision of the implementation of affirmative action provisions in various laws and institutions.

2) The establishment of a Program for Gender Equality in the schools, currently being implemented throughout the educational system, from pre-school through teacher-training colleges throughout the country. This program is scheduled to run for four years.

3) The consolidation and monitoring of funds allocated to the advancement of the status of women in the various ministries and statutory authorities, in order to maximize efficiency.

4) The initiation of an outreach program for the early detection of breast cancer among the more inaccessible women population groups, such as women in Jewish Arab villages in the periphery and especially Bedouin women, Druz women, new immigrants and Ultra-Orthodox women.

5) The establishment of an informative web-site for women.

6) The initiation of a project of informative and educational lectures and programs for civil servants, municipal councils employees and members of the Israel Defense Forces, with an emphasis on the prevention of domestic violence against women.

7) The sponsorship of a series of literacy projects for women in Arab villages in the periphery and especially Bedouin women, Druz women.

8) The sponsorship of a project of empowerment among single-parent families headed by women, focusing on skills needed for finding and maintaining employment.

9) The instruction of Cabinet Ministers to establish a complete list of names of women qualified to serve on the boards of directors of government companies and other senior positions.

10) The establishment of a National Authority for the Advancement of Girls and Women in Science and Technology. The Authority is involved with putting forward concrete policies to insure the advancement of women within academia, as well as within the education and industry sectors.

3.2.2 The Knesset Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women

The Committee, established in 1992 and granted the status of permanent Knesset Committee four years later, has continued to operate as a vital force enhancing the advancement of the status of women. Currently, the Committee consists of 15 members, Jews and Arab, females and males, from various political parties. The committee operates three sub-committees with different areas of activity:

1) The advancement of women in the workplace and in the economy.

2) The advancement of Arab women.
3) Women's health (The latter is a joint sub-committee of the Committee for the Advancement of Women and the Labor and Welfare Committee).

Recent legislation promoted by the Committee's work include the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law - 1998**, the **Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women Law - 1998**, the 2000 Amendment to the **Equal Rights for Women Law - 1951**, and the **Local Councils Law (Advisor on the Status of Women) - 2000**.

The Committee has initiated discussions and visits related to themes within its purview. The Committee also raised numerous motions for order transferred to it by the Knesset in areas such as violence against women, trafficking in women and women's health. After returning its conclusions to the Knesset, it has called on the relevant ministers to report on their implementation.

3.3 Governmental Performance in the Civil Service

Since its establishment in 1996, the Department for the Advancement of Women within the Civil Service has been active in various areas including the implementation within the Civil Service of legislation oriented towards the improvement of women's status, the promotion of information and counseling for women within the Civil Service, as well as the formation and professional orientation of professionals working to promote the advancement of women in the Civil Service. The Department has also served as an address for the complaints of female workers and has worked at maintaining on-going contact with organizations dealing with women's status in furtherance of common objectives, as well as with the Knesset's various committees to advance women's rights legislation.

In the context of action aimed at implementing the 1995 amendment to the **Civil Service Law (Appointments) - 1959**, a steering committee was formed to make recommendations to the Civil Service Commissioner. As a result of the committee's suggestions and the relevant department's efforts, section 15A of this Law has been revised once again in December 2000 (as discussed under Article 4 below). A current project being undertaken by the Department is the safeguarding of senior positions for women, by creating a resource of information, statistics, and guidelines for cooperation with the ministries' administrators.

With regards to the implementation of the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law – 1998** and the reinforcement of awareness on the subject, the Department has been involved on several levels: dissemination of information and explanation of the Law to more than 10,000 workers in 1999 alone, and provision of tools to the supervisors on the status of women so that they may receive the workers' complaints. Indeed, since the passage of the Law in 1998, the number of complaints of sexual harassment received by the Department has increased dramatically (with 20 complaints received in 1997, 30 in 1998, 61 in 1999 and 75 complaints received in 2000). These Complaints are handled in cooperation with the Unit for Discipline and the Investigations Department within the Civil Service Administration. Women who submit complaints of sexual harassment to the Department are provided with legal advice, and are accompanied and supported throughout the investigative process and the trial.

During the course of 1999 - upon the initiative and financial support of the National Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women - the Department held a wide range of activities on the subject of domestic violence and violence against women, including information and counseling sessions which drew as many as 13,500 male and female workers and employees.

As part of the training and professional orientation of Supervisors on the Status of Women in government offices, the Department held 3 training courses as well as approximately 30 sessions and conferences while providing on-going updates of relevant information and material to deal with issues relating to the status of women (in 2000, for example, 60 circulars were distributed to the Supervisors by the Department), in addition to biannual meetings that take place for the purpose of regulating and supervising the Supervisors' work. Apart from guiding and supervising the Supervisors, the Department is also in direct contact with female Civil Service employees through information dissemination and personal meetings.

In addition to all the above, the Department has served as an address to which women workers can turn to complain of discrimination, injustice and injury in their status and work conditions. Dozens of such complaints are received each year, concerning a wide variety of subjects. For example, in 2000, the Department processed and dealt with a total of 149 complaints relating to recruitment procedures for administrative positions which discriminated against women, as well as with the non-application of labor laws concerning maternity leaves, sexual harassment, and lack of proper representation of women in state tenders.

3.4 Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women in Specific Government Ministries

As stated above, the Department for the Advancement of Women in the Civil Service is responsible for the training and orientation of 80 Supervisors on Women's Status in all the governmental ministries and auxiliary units. The role of these Supervisors consists of distributing relevant information as well as organizing counseling and guidance activities in a variety of subjects relating to the status of women. The Department overlooks the implementation of labor laws regarding the status of women.

3.5 Measures Taken on the Municipal Level

The number of Women's Councils within the local councils has increased, particularly in the Arab sector. According to 1999 data, more than 70 such councils have functioned, among them 20 in Arab local councils. In addition, 16 more Women's Councils were being established at the time.

The major development in this area has been the **Local Councils Law (Advisor on the Status of Women) - 2000,** passed in August 2000, which mandates every local council to appoint an advisor on women's status issues. A direct subordinate of the head of the local council, the advisor will insure ongoing communication between it and the local Women's Council (when it exists) as well as the outlining of policy for the advancement of the status of women within the purview of the local authority, while insuring that necessary resources are provided to this end. In order to further her role, the advisor shall be invited to all the meetings of the local council and any of its committees, and will be given the opportunity to express her opinions in every subject that relates to the status of women. Furthermore, the advisor is expected to give an annual report to the Knesset Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women as well as to the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women and to the Local Council to which she is attached.

It must be mentioned furthermore that the law grants the Minister of the Interior the authority to order local councils to follow the law's directions, and where the local councils fail to do so, to appoint the advisor himself. The law states that the advisor - who must be ranked within one of the four top ranks of the administration's hierarchy – can be removed from position only by a decision of the local council.

Article 3

The Development and Advancement of Women

Women's organizations continue to play a very active and important role in the promotion of gender equality in Israel. The previous Report contained a detailed description of the major women's NGOs, categorized into types and areas of operation. These organizations and increasingly many more continue to operate in full force, thus representing a very strong and active civil society. On the political front, the women's peace movement had a major role in influencing public opinion that supported Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. On the legislative front, women's organizations continue to work in close cooperation with the Knesset Committee on the Advancement of the Status of Women. One of the most recent successful initiatives was the enactment of the **Victims' of Offences Rights Law – 2001**, on which many Egos had collaborated, as explained under Article 5 below.

Article 4

Acceleration of Equality Between Men and Women

1. Affirmative Action

1.1. Expanding Affirmative Action to Public Institutions

The last few years have witnessed some major developments in the area of affirmative action. While the use of this doctrine was limited in the past to governmental corporations and the civil service (through section 18A of the **Government Corporations Law - 1975**, and section 15A of the **Civil Service Law (Appointments) - 1995** respectively), there is a trend towards wider implementation of affirmative action in other segments of the labor market, and the public life at large.

In the 1998 case of *The Israel Women's Network* v. *The Minister of Labor and Welfare* (herein - the IWN case), the Supreme Court was asked to scrutinize the appointment of a male deputy director general of the National Insurance Institute. The Supreme Court examined the legal framework of the matter, asserting that no provision in the existing legislation explicitly sets the principle of adequate representation of women to that specific office. The court then turned to the "emerging doctrine" of appropriate representation derived from the general principal of equality to state that anyone responsible for the appointment of public officials must do everything possible to induce the appropriate representation of women in all public institutions.
On an operative level, the Court ordered the Minister of Labor and Welfare to actively seek suitable women candidates for the office, and recommended not to proceed with a conclusive appointment of the man who had already been temporarily appointed for a trial period. The Court, however, declined to actually void that appointment.

The 2000 Amendment to the **Women's Equal Rights Law - 1951** offers an express statutory confirmation of the broader approach expressed in the IWN case, by expanding the span of institutions in which the principal of affirmative action is required by statute. The added section 6c of the Law, "Adequate Representation", mandates adequate representation in all governmental ministries, local authorities, municipal corporations, statutory corporations and governmental corporations (See attached Legislative Supplement).

1.2. Affirmative Action in the Civil Service

A December 2000 amendment to section 15A of the **Civil Service Law (Appointments) - 1959** expands the use of the affirmative action mechanism within the Civil Service. According to the amendment it is obligatory to apply affirmative action in all sorts of hiring for the Civil Service. This includes actual appointments and non-tendered appointments. This amendment also authorizes the safeguarding of certain positions for women. While the amendment carries tremendous significance with regards to the implementation of the Law, its application might prove to be problematic given that these principles have been simultaneously employed for the advancement of other populations - minorities and people with disabilities. It is still not clear how the Civil Service will adapt to the application of this important amendment.

As noted under Article 2, the Department for the Advancement of Women in the Civil Service supervises the affirmative action policy asserted in section 15A of the **Civil Service Law (Appointments) - 1959**. Preliminary data that has been received from the Department, which will be detailed under article 11, portray an unchanging situation, in which the representation of women within the higher ranks of the Civil Service is far from being adequate, and the rate of their success in Civil Service tenders remains low. Regarding this issue, some scholars suggest that the important role assigned to the Department requires the strengthening of its status by promoting its Head, giving her position an integral part in the decision-making body.

1.3. Affirmative Action in Governmental Corporations

The special 1998 State Comptroller Report on Governmental Corporations addressed, among other issues, the implementation of section 18A of the **Governmental Corporations Law - 1975**, directing the use of affirmative action. After citing the Governmental Corporations Authority's data referring to a 30% rate of women on boards of directors in March 1998, it nevertheless concluded that the implementation of the law has not been fully satisfactory.

According to 2000 data the rate of women on boards of directors has since then increased, currently constituting 39% of the directors. It must be noted, however, that according to this data only one woman (2%) serves as a head of a board of directors, only 8 (10%) serve as CEO's of governmental corporations, and in 14% of all governmental corporations no women are present on the board of directors. In addition, the rates of women within new appointees seem to have dropped recently (from 44% in 1998 and 43% in 1999 to only 32% in the first 8 months of 2000).

1.4. Affirmative Action in Public Corporations

A research conducted in 1994, concerning women on the boards of directors in public corporations traded on the stock-exchange, revealed that more than 61% of the corporations had no women at all on their boards of directors, and in 27% of the remaining companies, there was only a single woman on their boards (Izraeli and Talmud 1996).

This grim reality did not escape the eyes of the legislator. Indeed, the most current legislative intervention in the form of affirmative action has been a 1998 amendment to the **Corporate Ordinance** (recently replaced by a similar section in the 1999 **Corporate Law**). Unlike the affirmative actions dispositions regarding the civil service and governmental corporations, the aforementioned amendment orders a much weaker form of affirmative action. It only refers to the two directors who are appointed as public representatives in every public corporation (defined as a company whose stocks are listed in the Tel-Aviv Stock Exchange or are offered to the public), mandating that one of them should be a woman, but only where there are no women at all on the board of directors. Nevertheless, even this move is far from trivial, as it expresses willingness on the part of the legislator to actually intervene in the private market in order to eliminate existing discrimination against women.

1.5. Affirmative Action in Other Areas

As mentioned above, both the high court decision in the IWN case and the 2000 amendment to the **Equal Rights for Women Law - 1951** established an all-encompassing basic principle in the Israeli legal system, of the legitimacy of affirmative action as an integral part of the principle of equality. They also established a requirement of adequate representation of women in public bodies, as part of the principle of equality. This basic principle is not limited to the area of employment, but rather may well encompass other areas of activities as well.

2. Special Measures Aimed at Protecting Maternity

The move from protective-paternalistic legislation which confines the participation in the workforce of pregnant women and women who gave birth to legislation which considers the family-unit as a whole and promotes greater involvement of fathers in child-rearing - having started in the mid 1990's – continued in the past few years, resulting in some very important legal provisions. Among these provisions (reviewed in detail under Article 11) are the 1997 and 1998 amendment to the **Employment of Women Law - 1954**, which provide women with the option to decide whether to work over-time during their pregnancy and allow couples to decide for themselves who will take the second half of the maternity-leave. As for the actual use of this option made by couples, in response to the committee's inquiry in its concluding comments, see under Article 11 below.

Article 5

Sex Roles and Stereotyping

1. Introduction

The discussion under this Article will be divided into several parts. The first part will describe women and the media in Israel, including stereotypes of women and pornography. Next, the impact of religion on the status of women will be reviewed. Finally, the major part of this article, as in the previous Report, will discuss the phenomenon of gender based violence against women.

2. Women and Media in Israel: Ranks and Positions

Much of Israel's electronic media is under the authority of The Israel Broadcast Authority (IBA), responsible for public broadcasting. While women head the IBA Council, the majority of central positions in editing and management remain in the hands of men. A 1997 internal examination in the IBA revealed that while women made up 41.5% of all workers, their rate in journalist and management positions was 10% lower than men's. Most significantly, within the senior ranks in the IBA, men constituted 80% of the department managers, and 90% of the unit managers (the highest position). In 80 internal tenders issued between 1995-97 for senior positions in the IBA, there were twice as many men candidates, and only 13 women were selected. Current data from December 2000 indeed indicates regression: the overall rate of women within the IBA went down to 41%, the 12 unit managers in the Hebrew and Arab television and the Hebrew radio were all men, and only within the Arab radio 2 out of the 3 unit managers were women; the rate of women among the journalists and reporters in the Hebrew televisions and radio was 27.6%, and in the Arab television and radio it was only 15.6%.

In 1994, a Second Authority for Television and Radio was established, controlling private broadcasting. Interestingly, the position of women within it is better than that of the IBA. Within the Second Authority Council, responsible for policy issues, a third of the members (5 of 15) are women. Within the Second Authority itself, women make up 60% of all workers, 50% of the senior managers are women (3 of 6), and 37.5% of the rest of the managers are women.

3. Pornography

A 1998 reform to the **Penal Law - 1977** is primarily concerned with the regulation of the emerging problems of child pornography, computer pornographic materials and the advertising of sex services.

This reform was prompted by the convening of a World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm, in August 1996, and the international concerns and initiatives that followed it. The preparations for this Congress had stimulated a process of inquiry and examination of this issue in Israel. One concrete result of this process was a 1997 bill to considerably reform the **Penal Law** in relation to prostitution and pornography. In 1998, the bill was partially passed. Significantly, of the substantive provisions relating to prostitution and the contents of pornography, mostly those that dealt with minors had passed. Thus, until this reform, only the actual *use of a minor* (under 18) in a pornographic publication or presentation was punishable by up to five years imprisonment. Realizing the growing phenomenon of pedophilic networks, its advanced technological operation, and the extent of the harm it causes, the law now also prohibits the *mere possession* of such pornographic materials (including computer materials) that contain minors or images of minors, even if it is for personal use only. This new offense is punishable by up to three years imprisonment, while the former offense of the use of a minor for pornographic publication or presentation was separated into two different offenses: that of publication, punishable by up to five years imprisonment; and that of preparation of such publication, or the use of a minor in a live show, punishable by up to seven years imprisonment. When these are done by the minor's guardian, or with the guardian's consent, the maximum sentence of the guardian is ten years imprisonment. (See previous report: definition of pornography)

The 1998 reform also broadened the definition of the terms 'publication' and 'publish' to include computer materials and the dispensation of materials through the use of computers, including the Internet, and other modes of computer-communications.

Another form of publication, which brings pornography and prostitution together, is the advertising of sex services. The 1998 reform explicitly prohibited, for the first time, any advertising of prostitution services by minors, including such services that are rendered out of Israel, an offense, which is punishable by up to five years imprisonment. The advertising of adults' prostitution services is also prohibited now and is punishable by up to six months imprisonment, except in special publications that are separate from other publications, marked as such, and given only upon specific request. Three police investigations are currently being conducted against two national newspapers and one local newspaper editors on these grounds.

4. Women and Religion in Israel

4.1. "Women of the Wall"

An interesting illustration of the effect of religion on Jewish women is the case of the "Women of the Wall". This group of women, representing all religious streams of Judaism, petitioned the High Court of Justice with the request to protect their right to freedom of religion by guaranteeing their right to pray in the manner they wished in a group with prayer shawls and Tora scroll, at the Western Wall. As reviewed in the previous Report, their petition was denied by the court, while the recommendations of the governmental committee established to investigate the case, that the women be allowed to pray in the manner they wish but in a secluded section of the Wall, was dismissed by the women, in principle and for practical reasons. In May 2000 a unanimous three justices' Court had finally accepted the women's position, and directed the government to make within six months, the appropriate arrangements for enabling the women's group to pray at the Wall in their manner, with minimum offense to other worshippers, and with the provision of the necessary security measures. However, the State's request for a rehearing of the case with an expanded panel of justices was granted, and the case is still pending before court.

5. Violence Against Women

5.1. Sexual Violence - Legal Aspects

5.1.1. Prevention of Sexual Harassment

The area of sexual harassment has undergone major normative change with the 1998 enactment of the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law - 1998**, and several recent high-profile cases of sexual harassment, some of which have reached the Supreme Court.

The new **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law - 1998** which is one of the most comprehensive laws of its kind, marks a dramatic normative development by making sexual harassment both a criminal and a civil offense, not limited to the context of workplace at all. The law states that it is aimed at preserving the dignity and the privacy of the person harassed, and at the promotion of gender equality. Sexual harassment is broadly defined to include unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any sexual verbal or physical conduct that demands such behavior or that conditions promotion or benefit upon such behavior. In order to be considered as harassment, the advances and the references must have been specifically rejected by the harassed person, unless it is done in the context of hierarchical working relationships, medical treatment or psychological therapy, or the harassed is a minor or a "helpless" person as defined in the penal law. In these latter cases, even consensual sexual advancements or relations may be considered as harassment. No harm needs to be proved in order to bring a criminal complaint or file a civil suit. The court may order up to 50,000 NIS in damage (approximately $12,000) even without proof of harm. Any sexual harassment that leads to actual harm is defined as aggravation, punishable by three years imprisonment (compared to two years for harassment). The law applies to the army, as well as to educational institutions. Its innovation includes obligating employers to take steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, including the setting-up of a mechanism for processing complaints, and the publication of regulations for this purpose.

Recently, the Supreme Court made important judicial contributions to the developing area of sexual harassment in two cases. Both cases dealt with events that preceded the enactment of the new sexual harassment law, but it is fair to assume that they will both serve as leading sources for future cases, as the justices clearly had the new law in mind when they formed their opinions, and indicated their reliance on the principles of the new law.

The first one, *The State of Israel* v. *Ben Asher*, dealt with college student's allegations against her professor for nonconsensually embracing and caressing her, and asking her out against her will. A complaint that was issued to the Civil Service Disciplinary Tribunal based upon these allegations was dismissed, stating that although the professor's behavior was despicable, it did not amount to sexual harassment. The Supreme Court accepted the State's appeal, and the professor was convicted of improper behavior according to the **Civil Service Code** (The Civil Service Code provisions regarding sexual harassment were detailed in the previous Report). The second one, *Anonymous* v. *The Chief of Staff and Others*, known as the *Galili* case, was a very high-profiled case that generated tremendous public debate. The High Court of Justice revoked the decision of the head of General Command and the Defense Minister to promote Brig. Gen. Galili to major-general, in spite of his former conviction in a court-marshall of "indecent sexual behavior", that was accompanied by suspension of promotion for two years . Galili's former clerk, with whom he had sexual relations, who had also accused him of raping her, but later dropped those allegations, brought the appeal against the promotion. The High Court of Justice accepted the woman's contention of the unreasonableness of the decision of the head of the General Command and the Defense Minister, and blocked the promotion.

In both cases, the Court's attitude was very firm in condemning both men's behavior, and it used particularly strong rhetoric in denunciation of sexual harassment, clearly acknowledging its role in setting the standards for acceptable social behavior in light of the changing social and legal norms. The court's emphasis put on sexual harassment as an offense against the woman's dignity and liberty is in line with the new constitutional jurisprudence, following the enactment of the two basic laws in 1992. This concept was also strongly advocated by the promoters of the new **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law**, and was indeed embedded into its first section, as mentioned above.

The most recent case in a series of high-profile sexual harassment cases, which attracted a lot of public attention, involved former Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who was convicted in two out of three charges of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Mordechai was serving as Minister of Transportation at the time of the allegations, and was considered to be a leading politician, having retired from the army after serving as Commander of the Northern Region and being a candidate to the post of Chief of Staff. The two cases in which Mordechai was found guilty concerned incidents that occurred when he was still a high-ranking army official, while the one put by the woman who has stepped forward first related to the more recent period of Mordechai's political career. In March 2001 he was found guilty in two out of the three charges, and faced a maximum sentence of seven years in prison. In April 2001 a split panel of three judges gave him an 18-month suspended sentence. The two male judges wrote that they weighed Mordechai's public achievements and military past in determining the sentence, whereas the dissenting judge, a woman, gave him 4 months in prison (with no possibility of service work) and a year of suspended sentence. Both the State and Mr. Mordechai have appealed the decision.

5.1.2. Rape Law

The most recent legislative amendment in the area of sexual violence against women took place in June 2001. It amended the actual definition of rape in section 345(a) of the **Penal Law - 1977**, removing its major part, leaving in only the requirement that the penetration of a woman's sexual organ be done without her free consent. Apparently, the rest of the definition that detailed possible causes for the lack of the woman's free will (such as "the use of force", as explained in the previous Report) was seemed redundant, especially in light of recent case law that had already interpreted the penetration itself as constituting "the use of force".

5.1.3. Victims of Offences' Rights Law – 2001

Another recent legislation, representing significant achievement for women's NGOs, and reflecting change of attitude and policy of law enforcement agencies towards victims, is the **Victims of Offences' Rights Law – 2001**, passed in March 2001. Following a struggle of several years, as described in the previous Report, a coalition of NGOs, including the Israel Women's Network, the Help Centers Union, the National Council for Children and the Association for the Advancement of Rights of People with Disabilities, has succeeded in convincing the legislature that a balance must be struck between the rights of the accused, the charged and the convicted on the one hand, and the rights of the victim on the other. The law grants a long list of rights, with special emphasis on victims of violence and sexual offences, including the right to protection in every stage of the criminal proceedings; the right to be notified on the proceedings' developments; the right to be notified on the perpetrator's arrest or release from arrest; the right to be accompanied by a companion during investigations; the right to express an opinion prior to proceedings' hold-up, plea-bargain, parole or clemency; and more, as can be seen in the Legislative Supplement.

5.1.4. Stalking

Another legislative initiative which has yet to bear fruit is the **Stalking Bill – 2001**, drafted by Na'amat women's organization. The Bill was tabled by four women Members of Knesset and is currently being by the Ministry of Justice. In its current version the Bill provides for the issuing of a prohibitive injunction against a person who engages in stalking, but does not make stalking a criminal offence.

5.1.5. Minimum Punishments and Protection of Witnesses

Other legislative developments, include the 1998 amendment to the **Penal Law - 1977**, which instituted a minimum punishment for those convicted of rape, of indecent acts and of sex crimes against family members, constituting 1/4 of the maximum that may be imposed. The amendment still permits deviation from this minimum, but only under special mitigating circumstances which should be detailed in the judgement. However, case law has proved the amendment to be faulty, since the legislature failed to mandate that the prison term be actually served and not merely suspended. Another initiative to set minimum punishment relates to domestic violence and will be described below.

In addition, regulations for implementing the provisions of The **Procedural Amendment Law (Amendment No. 2) (Questioning of Witnesses), 1995**, authorizing courts to order that the testimony of a complainant in a sexual offense be given in the accused's absence, whenever the court believes that the complainant or the complainant's testimony may otherwise be harmed, were promulgated in 1997, providing for the use of close-circuit television systems in such cases. Such systems were set up in the five District Courts, and in the Magistrate's Court in the city of Eilat.

5.2. Family Gender-Based Violence - Legal Aspects

5.2.1. Recent Amendments to the Prevention of Violence in the Family Law-1991

Throughout the last few years, the normative framework of the area of the prevention of domestic violence has continued to develop, resulting in two substantial legislative amendments to the **Prevention of Violence in the Family Law-1991**.

A 1997 amendment to the law has added two grounds for issuing a protective injunction aiming at protecting those experiencing domestic violence. According to the amendment, the court may grant a protective injunction where the subject of the injunction has either "unlawfully confined a family member", or where there is severe and prolonged emotional abuse, such as where there is the behavior that does not allow the victimized family member reasonable and sound management of life. In the latter case, though, the injunction will be issued only in the presence of both parties, unless the perpetrator does not show up in court. The 1997 amendment also extended the maximal periods of protective injunctions and probations, setting them at one year each (compared to 6 months each before the amendment).

In recognition of the injunction's importance as an immediate protective remedy designed for emergency situations, the 1997 amendment allows appeals of decisions pursuant to

Prevention of Violence in the Family Law, to be heard by a single judge of the District Court instead of the previously required panel of three, so as to ensure that such appeals be made within a reasonable period following the granting – or the rejection - of the injunction.

A 1998 amendment to the law further broadened the already extensive choice of jurisdictions available to the requesting party, by further giving religious courts the jurisdiction to grant protective injunctions. It is believed that this amendment may ease the plight to women in ultra-orthodox communities who often hesitate to turn to civil courts.

5.2.2. Other Legislative Developments

According to Israeli laws of evidence, spouses, children and parents may testify to the detriment of their family member only in cases of violent crime. This limitation had created an odd situation, whereby a wife; for example, who requested a protective injunction was not able to testify to the detriment of her husband regarding non-violent violations of the injunction. As she is often the only witness of such violations, this limitation placed a serious obstacle on the implementation of the law. A 1997 amendment to the **Evidence Ordinance [New Version] - 1971** has included such violations of protective injunctions among the instances where a spouse (or other close family member) may testify.

A 1997 amendment to the **Weapon Law - 1949** followed the existing legislation aiming at restricting the possession of a gun by a person against whom a protective injunction was issued, or who was arrested under the suspicion of committing an act of violence against a family member. According to the amendment, a court which convicts an individual of any violent crime is not to refuse the prosecution's request to suspend whatever weapon license that individual might have, or to deposit that weapon with the police. Any refusal of such a request must be accounted for with special reasons. The amendment, however, does not address the issues of individuals who are members of the security forces or who perform reserve duty in the army, nor the proposal to require welfare officials to notify the official in charge of weapon license registrations whenever they have reason to believe that an individual may endanger a family member if he is allowed to carry a weapon, even though various bills that prompted this amendment did address these issues.

Two recent legislative developments attempt to aid battered women on the economic level. The first is the **Employment of Women Law (Amendment 19)(Limitations of Dismissals of Worker who stays in a shelter for battered women)- 2000**, aimed at protecting from being fired, women who miss work due to their hiding in shelters from being fired. The employer is restrained from dismissing the woman during her stay at the shelter for a maximum period of six months, and during the 30 days following her return to work, provided her stay was approved by the welfare authorities and the employer was notified accordingly. During that time period she is to receive a social security benefit instead of a salary from the employer. Furthermore, if the woman quits her job as a result of her stay in the shelter, her resignation is to be regarded as dismissal, for purposes of eligibility to receive worker's dismissal compensations. The second legislative initiative is the 2001 amendment to the **Single Parent Families Law - 1992**, which added women who stay more than 90 days in battered women's shelters and started divorce proceedings to the definition of "single parent" eligible to several welfare benefits, as explained under Article 13 of the previous Report. This is an important step in freeing battered women from being economically dependent on their spouses. The economic dependency has often precluded them from initiating divorce proceedings. Another legislative development is a 2000 amendment to the **Penal Law - 1977**, which sets a minimum punishment for grave acts of assault and violence against family members, constituting a fifth of the maximum that may be imposed.

5.2.3. The Inter-Ministerial Committee for Treatment of Domestic Violence

In 1998, an Inter-Ministerial Committee was set to examine the problem of violence against women within the family, continuing the work of the 1996 committee mentioned in the previous Report. The committee's working premise and final goal was to set-up the mechanism for a comprehensive coordination between all the organs that operate in this area. Accordingly, the committee examined the situation on almost all-governmental and operational fronts, and many of its recommendations are indeed geared at a broad spectrum that cuts across various governmental ministries and organs.

The Committee's report proposes a line of thorough reforms needed throughout the system, starting with some further legislative amendments, through professional training, information gathering and monitoring, development of risk-evaluation tools, educational programs, special needs population groups, civil and military possession of weapons, and cooperation on the local level. Much of the committee's plans for professional training are in line with the CEDAW Committee's inquiry about gender sensitization programs for the police. The overall budget requested for implementing these recommendations was approximately $50 million.

In April 1999 the government adopted the Report's recommendations, deciding on a gradual implementation over several years, and ordering the inclusion of the necessary budget for a list of projects approved for immediate implementation. In 2000, 12,000,000 NIS (approximately $3,000,000) were directly allocated by the Ministry of Finance for the implementation of these projects, with additional 12,000,000 NIS granted by various government ministries. These sums were allocated with the commitment of continuing similar annual allocations.

5.3. Extent of the Phenomenon of Sexual Violence Against Women

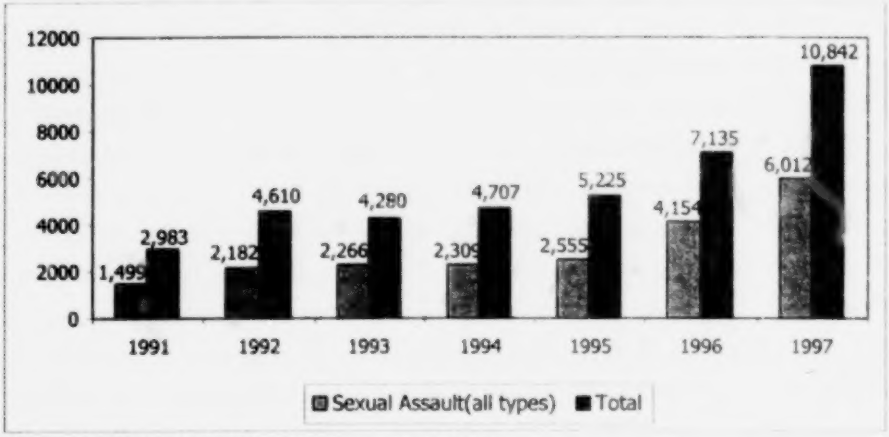
5.3.1. The JDC-Brookdale Institute Survey

Precise statistics regarding the extent of the phenomenon of sexual violence against women are difficult to obtain, as most instances go unreported, and victims generally hesitate before turning to the police or even to other treatment services for assistance. However, a recent JDC-Brookdale Institute 2000 survey (based on data collected in 1998) enables, for the first time, to have a relatively accurate impression as to the real situation. Unlike previous statistics, derived from police and Help Centers records, the data here reflects self reporting of a nationally representative sample of adult women (i.e. over 22 years old) regardless of whether they turned to official authorities or to any help services. The researchers, however, qualify their findings, warning that this too is a minimal estimation. According to the survey, 2% of adult women in Israel (34,000 women) had at some time been victims of rape, 4% (68,000) were victims of sexual violence, and 8% (136,000) were victims of physical violence. No data was obtained as to the number who suffered violence during the year prior to the survey. Significantly, only one third of the rape victims, one third of the sexual violence victims, and 42% of the physical violence victims had sought some kind of medical aid (Gross & Brammli- Greenberg 2000, 49- 52)

5.3.2. The Sexual Assault Help Centers Data

Not a formal authoritative institute, but still involving some degree of exposure on the part of the victims, the Help Centers Union also supplies important data. The **Israeli Sexual Assault Victim's Help Centers Union**, established in 1990, currently operates thirteen centers, spread throughout the country, including one in Jerusalem that specifically serves ultra-Orthodox Jewish women and takes calls from around the country, and two (in Haifa and in Nazareth) that are specially geared towards serving Arab women. The Help Centers Union's annual reports show consistent increase in women's appeals for help, which is conventionally explained as a combination of an increasing level of violence against women, and a growing awareness on the part of women. As the Help Centers serve as a junction not only for sexual assault victims but also for other situations of distress, in addition to serving as an information center, the following chart depicts the increase in requests in general and for assistance following sexual assaults in particular. Data presented below is from 1997, the most recent year where data is available.

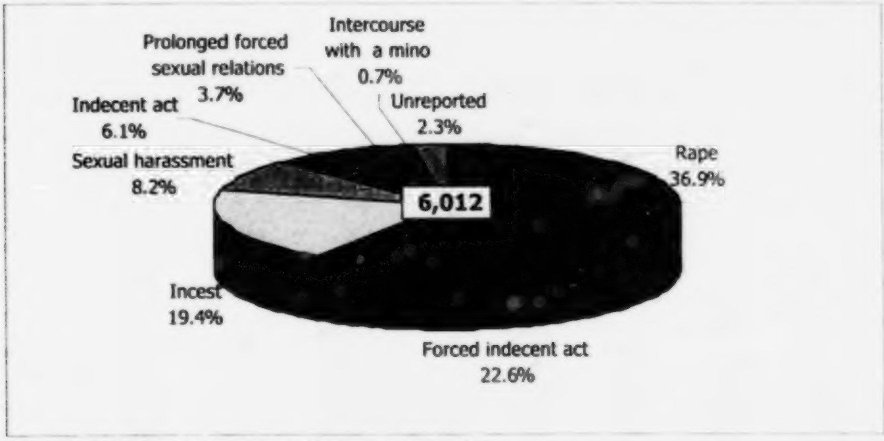
Chart 1 - Appeals to the Help Centers, 1990-1997



Source: Help Centers Union, *Sexual Violence in Israel 1997*

In 1997, rape, followed by sexual assault and incest were the most common complaints received by the Help Centers. Despite the growing number of appeals for help each year, the relative number of requests relating to all types of sexual assault has remained relatively consistent from year to year. Significantly, what has changed in recent years was the relative number of sexual harassment complaints (8.2% of all complaints in 1997, compared to 4.4% in 1994). This may be explained by increasing public awareness of sexual violence in general, following public campaigns, and of growing legitimization to report and seek help for any kind of sexual violence, even if previously perceived as negligible. Undoubtedly, the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law** in addition to the high profile cases has had their impact in this respect.

Chart 2 - Applications to Help Centers by the Type of Sexual Assault, 1997



Source: Help Centers Union, *Sexual Violence in Israel 1997*

The Help Centers statistics further reveal that in 1997, similar to previous years, the majority of women who turned for assistance following a sexual attack were acquainted with the assailant. In 62.7% of the cases there was some form of previous acquaintance. In 25% the assailant was a family member, and in 7.5% of the cases the assailant was the victim's spouse. In only 11.4% of the cases was the assailant a stranger, contradicting the accepted misconception of rape as a crime generally perpetrated by strangers.

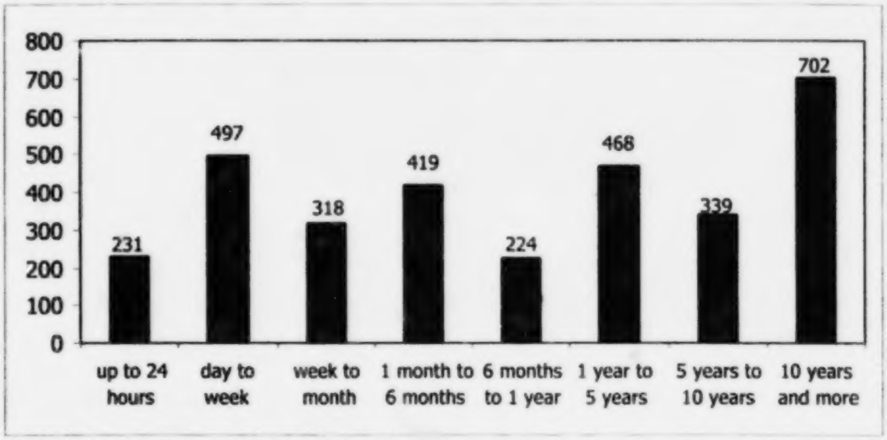
Similarly, approximately 1/2 of the attacks took place in areas deemed "safe," such as the victim's or assailant's home, school, or workplace, where the victim had come of her own free will. In 28.1% of the cases, the attack took place in the home of the victim or of the perpetrator. In 1/4 of the instances they took place in the victim's home. In contrast, only 13% reported incidents outside or while hitch hiking.

As in previous years, the majority of victims in 1997 -- about 72%-- were under the age of 25 at the time of the attack. The largest group was of adolescents (between 13-18), comprising 21.4% of the total, followed by girls (up to 12), comprising 18.1% of the total. On the other hand, the stratification of the age of the victims at the time of reporting is different. Forty percent of the women were between 13-25 years old, 12% were over 26, and 11.4% were under 12. To a great extent the discrepancy is the result of the time that usually passes between the attack and the turn to help.

The next two charts show that only a minority of victims of sexual violence (about 12%) seeks immediate professional help within a week of the attack, and that an overwhelming

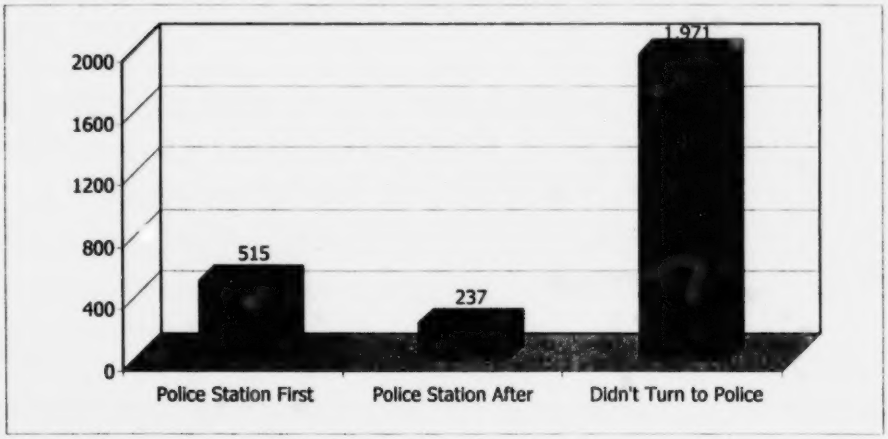
72.4% of those who did turn to a Help Center chose to refrain from reporting the incident to the police (compared to 73.1% in 1994).

Chart 3 - Time Period between Incident and Reporting to Help Centers, 1997



Source: Help Centers Union, *Sexual Violence in Israel 1997*

Chart 4 - Relationship Between Referral to Help Centers and Reporting to Police, 1997



Source: Help Centers Union, *Sexual Violence in Israel 1997*

5.3.3. Police Handling of Sex Crimes Against Women

In attempting to assess the extent of sexual violence against women, police data can only serve as an indication of the trend that takes place, and not of the actual scope. In this respect, the overall direction is of an increase in the number of sexual violence cases in general, and of grave sexual offenses (defined as rape or forced indecent acts) cases in particular.

Table 1 - Police Handling of Sexual Violence Complaints, by Offense, 1996-1999

Offense	Status	1996	1997	1998	1999
Forceful Rape	A T	25	44	53	31
	P A	455	472	545	618
Forced Indecent Act	A T	345	396	399	404
	P A	1,332	1,361	1,566	1,766
Sexual Harassment*	A T	0	0	9	47
	P A	0	0	10	65
Other Sexual Offences	A T	125	140	216	119
	P A	566	580	681	909
Total	A T	495	580	677	601
	P A	2,353	2,413	2,802	3,358

*Sexual Harassment was defined as a separate crime in 1998

C R = A criminal file has been opened

N P = No criminal proceeding has been pursued

Source Israel police

In 1999, criminal investigation files were opened by the police in approximately 85% of reported sexual violence involving women as victims (an increase from the 80% rate in 1997 and 1998).

5.3.4. Prosecutorial Policy Regarding Sexual Violence Against Women

In 1996, the Sexual Assault Help Centers Union collaborated with the Israel Women's Network in promoting the establishment of a Victim's Witness Assistance Program, described in the previous Report. During the first two and a half years of its operation, 150 victims received assistance and support throughout the criminal proceedings. In addition to the invaluable backing for the victims, prosecutors have attributed successful prosecutions to the project, finding that the emotional support that the victims received have made them better witnesses, and have enabled the prosecutors to exclusively concentrate on their professional role.

5.3.5. Sentencing for Sex Crimes

As has been previously mentioned, the 1998 amendment to the **Penal Law - 1977** established a minimum punishment ceiling for sexual violence. There is no available data regarding the effect this reform has had since its adoption.

5.3.6. Funding of the Help Centers

The lion share of the Help Center's operational budget comes from the private sector, mostly from independent fund-raising. The governmental subsidy for the Help Centers Union comes from the budget of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare. Between 1995 and 1998 the Ministry of Labor and Welfare had substantially increased its support to the help centers. The most significant raise came during 2000, when the ministries' subsidy to the Union of the Help Centers has undergone a five-time increase, to $600,000, making it 35% of the Help Centers Union's operational budget. This move is even more significant, since the budget now comes from a specially designated item in the ministry's budget, so that it is no longer up to the ministry's officials whether to allocate it and how much.

Another governmental source of support are annual grants from the Estates' Fund, which started supporting the Centers in 1997 (see also Table 3, presented below).

5.4. Extent of the Phenomenon of Domestic Violence

5.4.1. The JDC-Brookdale Institute Survey

The JDC-Brookdale Institution 2000 survey, mentioned above, confirms earlier estimates of the phenomenon of domestic violence, estimates which were presented in the previous Report. From interviewing a nationally representative sample of 850 women aged 22 and over, the researchers conclude that approximately 200,000 women in Israel (11% of the adult population of women) have been victims of violence at least once by their spouse, and approximately 67,000 (4% of the adult population of women) have been victims of domestic violence during the year prior to the survey. Among those who had been victims in the past year, 19% reported that violent incidents occurred every day or several times a week, 42% reported occurrences several times a month, 14% reported several times a year, and 25% reported less frequent occurrences. As the survey was part of an international study, it also enables a comparative perspective.

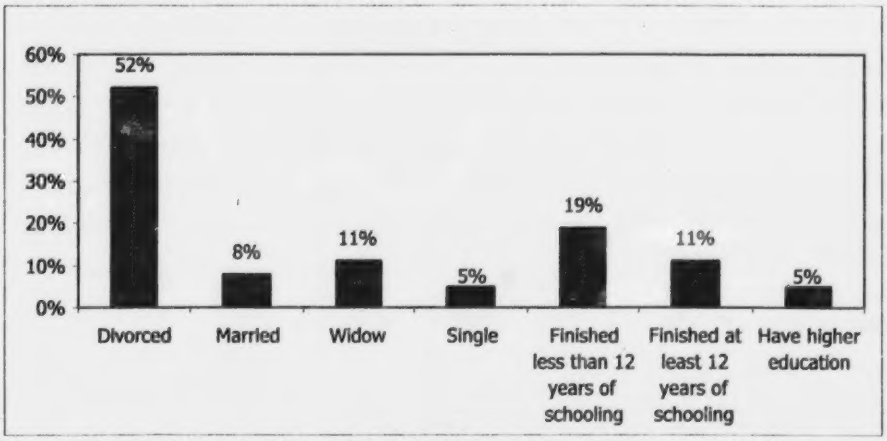
Table 2 - Domestic Violence Against Women, in the U.S.A. and in Israel, 1998

	U.S.A.	ISRAEL
Precentage of Women Reporting of Domestic Violence	31%	11%
Thereof: Talking to a doctor	29%	22%
Incidents in which the Doctor Initiated the Conversation	20%	9%
Incidents in which the Doctor Sent the Woman to the Police	23%	16%
Incidents in which the Doctor Sent The Woman to Support Services	48%	32%

Source: JDC-Brookdale Institute 1998, as Reported in Ha'aretz, October 2000

In addition to a general assessment of the phenomenon, the survey also provided analysis of its scope among various population groups. While a significant rate of violence was found among all strata of society, it was higher among those with low education. Of those women who had not graduated high-school, 19% reported having at some time been the victim of spousal abuse, while 11% of the high school graduates and 5% of the women with higher education reported the same. Also, the rate of victims of spousal abuse was particularly high among divorcees (52%), compared with 11% among widows, 8% among married women, and 5% among single women. The researchers suggest that the figure relating to married women might reflect under-reporting, since the survey was conducted through telephone interviews, which might have taken place while other family members, including spouses, were at home. While this survey did not examine other demographic variables, such as ethnicity or origin, and other scientific sources are not available on this subject, welfare authorities and others involved in treatment services have previously indicated the higher level of domestic violence among immigrants, both from Ethiopia and from the former USSR, sadly reflected in a disproportionately high presence of these social groups in cases of women murdered by their spouses.

Chart 5 - Reports of Spousal Violence Among Women, 1998



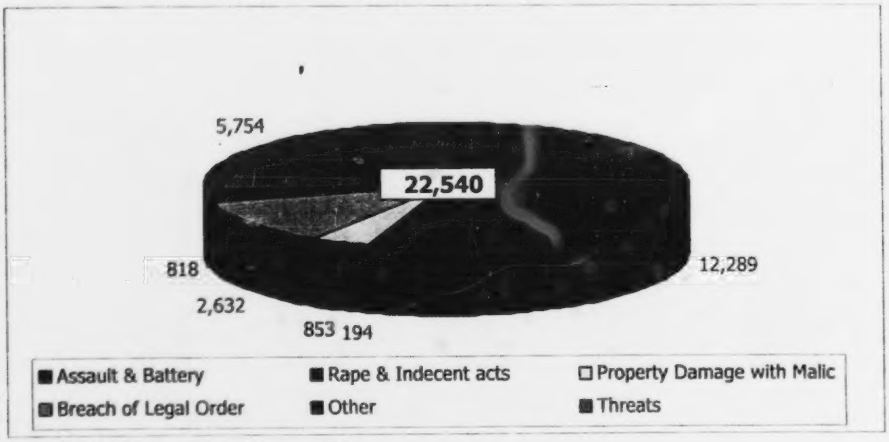
Source: JDC-Brookdale Institute 1998, as Reported in Ha'aretz, October 2000

According to recent data from the National Service for Social Work within the Ministry of Health, hospitals reported to the Ministry's national database of a mere 1,472 battered women admitted for medical care in 1999. This figure reflects a very low detection rate of domestic violence incidents, and calls for the initiation of appropriate educational and training programs, as the CEDAW committee has also indicated in its concluding comments. Indeed, several such programs were already adopted in the last few years, including regular visits to shelters of battered women as an integral part of a course at the Haifa University Medical School and the of the field of sexual assaults, which was added to the curriculum of the Tel Aviv University Medical School gynecology course. In addition, a new training program, which includes seminars, workshops and lectures, is currently being operated, targeted at practicing medical personnel.

5.4.2. Police Handling of Domestic Violence

Police records show constant rise in complaints of domestic violence. Thus, in 1998, the police received a total of 21,912 complaints of domestic violence submitted by women, which constituted 76% of all domestic violence reports (compared to 14,706 complaints in 1995, which constituted the same ratio - 76% - of all domestic violence reports). These alarming numbers continue to grow, as 22,540 files of domestic violence were opened in 1999, 194 of which dealt with severe spousal sexual violence against women, which falls into the categories of forced rape or forced indecent acts (an increase from 113 such incidents reported in 1995).

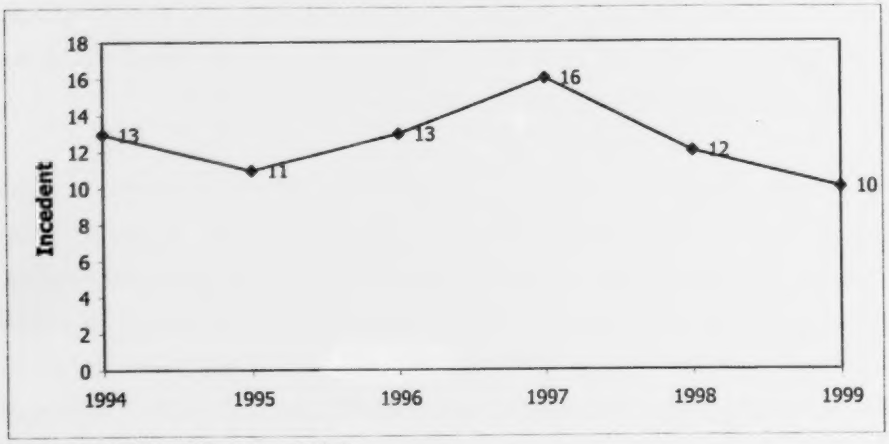
Chart 6 - Opened Police Files by Type of Offense in Spousal Violence, 1999



Source: Israel Police, *Crime in Israel 1999*

Domestic violence in its extreme form can be a threat to a woman's very existence. Between 1990 and November 1998 a total of 113 women were killed by their spouses in Israel. These murders constitute 13% of all murders during that period.

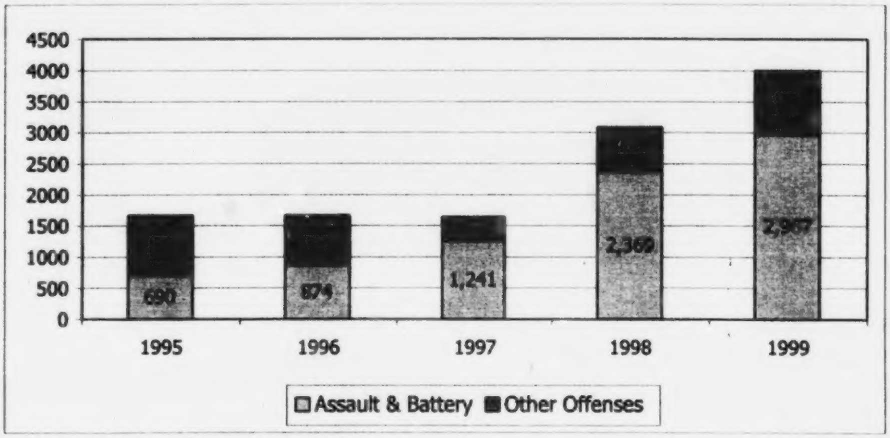
Chart 7 - Murder of Women by Their Spouse, 1994-1999



Source: Israel Police, *Crime in Israel 1999*

One result of the increasing extent of the phenomenon of domestic violence is the growing number of arrests of involved suspects, especially in cases of assault and battery offenses. However, as will be detailed below, a recent survey reveals that only in a small minority of the cases arrests were actually made during all levels of handling (Eisikovitz & Griffel 1998).

Chart 8 - Total Arrests in Spousal Violence, Including Assault & Battery, 1995-1999



Source: Israel Police, *Crime in Israel 1999*

In 1998, an evaluation study on Police Intervention in Intimate Violence was commissioned by the Ministry of Internal Security. The study supplies some concrete statistics regarding the area of domestic violence. In addition, a thorough analysis of the policemen's own attitudes and perceptions of violence against women within the family revealed that the professed goals of the police in the area of domestic violence are not fully achieved. The study's findings, as well as the section that follows on police practices, also serve as a response to the committee's inquiry about gender sensitization programs to the police and their impact.

The research first point out that there was a 61% increase in the rate of initiation of criminal proceedings between 1995-98, from 50% of all complaints in 1995, to over 78% of all complaints in 1998. This growth, however, is hardly matched by the subsequent handling of the cases, and could in fact be related to the rise in the severity of the cases: in 1997 66% of the cases involved battery, while in 1995 only 40% were cases of battery. As for the rest of the proceedings, in only 9% of the cases arrests were made during all levels of handling, and in only 6% of them the police arrested the suspect on the scene. This finding is further contrasted by the views expressed by the police personnel themselves, 75% of whom believe it is the police's duty to arrest a man who beats his wife, and 87% of whom actually state that they routinely arrest the man when arriving to the place where violent against the woman took place. Similarly, while 71% of them agree that a battering man has to be forced to receive some treatment, their findings reveal that referrals to treatment, in any stage of the proceedings, were made in only 8% of the cases (Eisikovits & Griffel 1998).

Perhaps most striking is the finding that out of 1000 cases analyzed, only 14.5% of the suspects were actually put to trial, only 6% were convicted, and only 1.2% of the total (i.e. 12 out of 995) were sent to jail. In addition, in only 8% of the cases were there referrals to treatment. The study further reveals that only 57% of the police workers surveyed for the research stated that they were well-versed with the laws in this area, and 84% were interested in obtaining more information in this respect. The research put the lack of knowledge of relevant laws and regulations among the leading causes for the non-satisfactory handling by the police of spousal violence.

Major parts of the study provide a close focus on the actual attitude of police personnel towards the subject-matter, as reflected from the routine handling of the files themselves, through quantitative evaluation of the questionnaires, and careful analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted with them. A survey of the files revealed overall neglect regarding their handling, so that, for example, no testimony of the victim was found in 6% of the cases, and in 61% there was no certification of the complaint filed. More alarming, of course, is the finding of partial legitimization towards wife battery: 7.7% of the police personnel agree that "sometimes the woman deserves to be beaten", 9.3% believe that "a man is allowed to beat his wife only if she cheats on him", 17% believe that "a woman who keeps quiet, will forestall beatings from herself", and 26% believe that "sometimes, the woman causes the man to beat her".

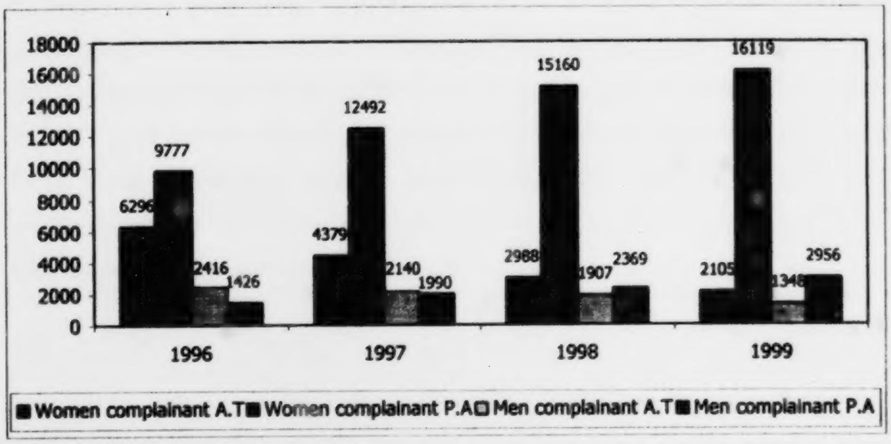
On a more positive note, it must be emphasized that gradual progress has been made in police's handling of domestic violence in recent years. Continuing the steps taken in 1990, reported in the previous Report, a national investigative-system focusing solely on domestic violence was established in 1998 in all police stations throughout the country, consisting of 120 specially trained investigators who only handle domestic violence cases. Fifty other investigators handle these cases in smaller police stations in addition to doing other work. According to Israel police, there are currently at least two investigators specializing in domestic violence in each police station, and most of these units are headed by an officer, often a woman officer. Nine of the 120 positions were reserved for Arab women investigators in stations that serve the Arab community. The five-day preparatory course for these investigators includes theoretical and practical knowledge in the sociological and legal aspects of the field of domestic violence as well as the various police regulations in this field. The course consists of lectures, discussions, workshops, analysis of investigation files as well as a visit to a shelter for battered women.

The cooperation between the police and welfare officials is also worth noting. The formal procedure requires the referral of complainants (upon their consent) and suspects to the welfare officials. These officials will, in turn, send reports to the police, concerning suspects they examined.

5.4.3. Statistical Data on Current Police Practices Regarding the Handling of Domestic Violence Cases

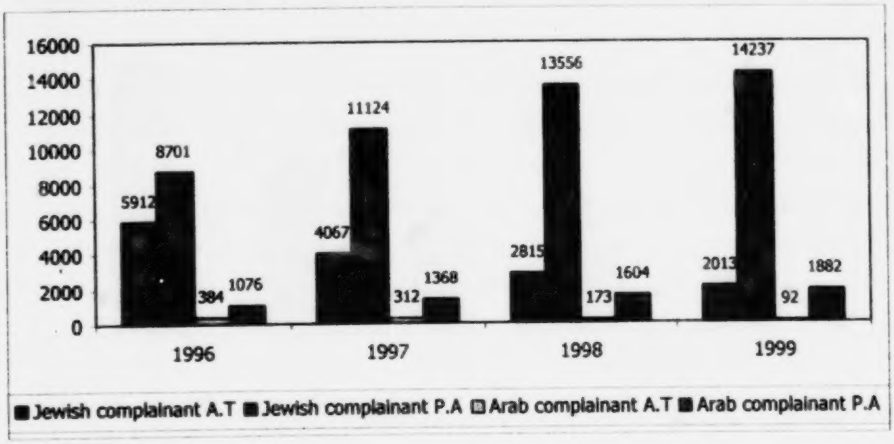
As noted earlier, there was a sharp increase in the rate of initiation of criminal proceedings in domestic violence cases in recent years, from 50% of all complaints in 1995, to over 84% of all complaints in 1999. The following charts further exhibit this data by complainant gender and religion.

Chart 9 - Police Handling of Domestic Violence, by Complainant Gender, 1996-1999



Source: Israel Police

Chart 10 - Police Handling of Domestic Violence against Women, by Complainant Religion, 1996-1999



Source: Israel Police

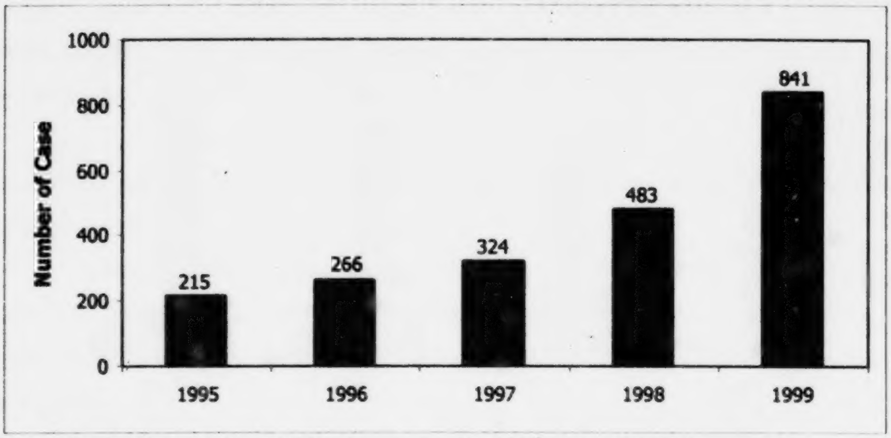
["C.R." refers to instances where a criminal file has been opened (Case Record), while "N.P." refers to instances where no criminal proceeding has been pursued (No Proceedings)].

5.4.4. Sentencing for Domestic Violence

As already mentioned, the 1998 study on Police Intervention in Intimate Violence revealed that out of 1000 cases analyzed, only 14.5% of the suspects were actually put to trial, only 6% were convicted, and only 1.2% of the total were sent to jail. The study further revealed that the most common sentence for those convicted was a suspended prison term (in 65% of the convictions, compared to 22% of the convicted who were sentenced to actual prison terms).

Between 1997 - 2000, a total of 16,336 suits, based on the **Prevention of Violence within the Family Law** provisions, were filed. At the same time, 8,606 requests for various injunctions offered as part of the law were granted. The following chart exhibits a substantial increase in restraining orders granted by the courts in recent years:

Chart 11 - Restraining Orders Issued Against Husbands



Source: Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Services, as reported in Ha'aretz, August 2000

One additional piece of information regarding sentencing for domestic violence offenses relates to appeals made by the State. According to data supplied by the State Attorney's office, appeals of acquittals and of sentences in the area of domestic violence comprise the majority (60%) of all the appeals that the State makes.

5.4.5. Centers for the Treatment and Prevention of Domestic Violence

The number of Centers for the Treatment and Prevention of Domestic Violence keeps rising steadily, currently standing at 31 such centers throughout the country (compared to 19 at the time of writing of the previous Report). In 1997, 3000 families were treated in these centers, compared to 1770 in 1994. In 1998, 4700 families were treated in the centers, while each center's budget is intended to cover only 120 families a year. The centers' budget comes mostly from the Ministry of Labor and Welfare (75%) and from the local authorities (25%), and it has been 6 times larger in 1999 then the first budget in 1993. In 2000 their budget stood at about $1.75 million. However, due to their overload, most of the centers (70%) routinely report a budgetary deficit. The tremendous growth in the number of families treated by the centers can be attributed to the increase in the number of centers available, and to greater awareness of the problem by the public. The results of the treatment have been very positive, and according to reports from the centers, in most families who were treated, the violence either stopped altogether or decreased significantly.

5.4.6. "Noam Home"

One particular treatment program, which is unique worldwide, is a hostel for battering men. Called the "Noam Home", this hostel, established in 1997, houses 12 men at a time, each for a period of four months. Geared towards the most difficult group of violent men who were issued injunctions prohibiting their entering their homes, the hostel conducts group and individual treatments, aiming at their "withdrawal" from violence, as the term used by the project's promoters in the media. The project was started as a special "experiment project" under the National Insurance Institute, and showed remarkable success according to its evaluators. Up to date 130 men were treated in the hostel.

A similar project, targeted at sexual violence criminals is currently being promoted by a group of professionals and professors. The project will consist of hostels, in which convicted sexual violence criminals will stay upon their release from prison for 6-24 months.

5.4.7. Shelters for Battered Women

In 1998, 737 women and 1026 children were housed by 13 shelters for battered women, a significant increase from the 1995 figures reported in the previous Report (when the shelters housed 472 women and 695 children). Still, these numbers obviously do not meet the needs of the thousands of victims of domestic abuse who request acceptance each year. Consequently, the immediate budgetary request of the 1998 Inter-Ministerial Committee for Treatment of Domestic Violence was to establish two more shelters, one for Arab women (in addition to the existing shelter serving the Arab sector) and one for ultra-Orthodox women. The latter shelter was in fact established in mid 2000. Other initiatives in this field include the adaptation of the shelters to house women with disabilities (so far one of the shelters is qualified for this mission, and two others are undergoing required arrangements), and the organization of all shelters enabling them to receive women on a 24 hours basis (compared to one such emergency shelter operating currently).

In addition to the operating 13 shelters, there are currently 43 "transitional apartments", designed to assist women in their transition back into life outside of the shelter. In 1998, 61 women and 116 children passed through these apartments; the average length of their stay is one year.

As reviewed in Israelis previous Report, the establishment of the shelters for battered women was financed solely by various non-profit organizations. The ongoing upkeep expenses of the shelters, on the other hand, were partially funded by the Ministry of Labor and Welfare and by the local authorities. Until 1995, the Ministry covered approximately 50% of the expenses. Since 1997, the Ministry formed a new scale of subsidizing the shelters, and their operational expenses are now divided between three sources: the Ministry of Labor and Welfare – 56.25%; the local authority – 18.75%; the operating NGO – 25%. The Ministry's budgetary allocation for the shelters has dramatically increased over the last few years, and is 23.5 times greater in realistic terms in 2000 (about $2.3 million) then it was in 1993. Nonetheless, in 2000 it decreased 11% compared with 1999. The local authorities' budget for the shelters has similarly increased 16 times since 1993, and in 2000 it stood at approximately $0.75 million.

Table 3 - Total Financing of Services for the Prevention of Violence against Women, 1990-2000

In Thousands NIS

Year	Total Govermental Financing	Centers for Prevention of D.V		Help Centers		Shelters for Battered Women		
		Ministry of Labor & Welfare	Local Authorities	Ministry of Labor & Welfare	Estates Fund	Ministry of Labor & Welfare	Local Authorities	Estates Fund
1990	643			69		362	212	
1991	609			66		353	190	
1992	681			66		421	194	
1993	1,773	857		62		391	180	283
1994	2,798	852		61		1,216	410	259
1995	3,727	1,098		143		1,718	573	195
1996	7,789	1,807	602	276		3,824	1,280	
1997	12,751	4,375	1,463	348	554	4,273	1,426	312
1998	20,503	4,972	1,661	352	631	9,416	3,066	405
1999	22,329	5,298	2,405	340	500	10,304	2,952	530
2000	21,631	6,636	2,454	343	N.A.	9,188	3,010	N.A.

Source: Adva Center 2000

5.4.8. Hotlines

There are currently ten hotlines for battered women throughout the country, one of which operates in Arabic, and one national hotline which operates through a toll free 1-800 number. The most recent data regarding the number of calls received by the hotlines appeared in the 1998 Inter-Ministerial Committee for Treatment of Domestic Violence Report, and estimated that the national line takes around 5000 calls a year, and the ten municipal lines served 7000 callers in 1997.

5.4.9. Violence Against Women within the Arab Community

According to the 2000 JDC-Brookdale Institute Survey, the rates of domestic violence incidents are highest within the Arab sector (17%, compared to 14% within the Jewish sector). However, according this survey, Arab women are less likely to discuss domestic violence incidents with their doctor or any other medical professional. In addition, it should be noted that very few Arab women turn to Help Centers and report domestic violence incidents. For instance, in 1997, only 254 Arab women turned to the Help Centers, constituting a mere 4.2% of all applicants that year. In addition, as already exhibited in chart

10 above, very few complaints regarding domestic violence are being reported within the Arab sector (Gross & Brammli- Greenberg 2000).

According to HRA (Arab Association for Human Rights), in 1998, 6 Arab women were murdered in the name of what is known as "family honor". In relation to the CEDAW Committee's call on the State of Israel to eliminate all forms of unjustifiable practices, including "honor killings", it should be mentioned that the police treats these cases as it treats all grave murder cases. The serious concern and handling of such incidents is also reflected in the case law where courts consistently denounce the attempt to claim "family honor" as a mitigating ground and entirely condemn these practices. On the procedural level, courts consistently refuse to free suspects in these cases on bail, even in such circumstances where the suspect, the victim's grandfather, was eighty years old.

Article 6

Suppression of the Exploitation of Women

1. General

The State of Israel regards the phenomenon of trafficking with severity, and the topic is high on the agenda of law enforcement authorities, with the aim of increasing strict enforcement over the major causes of the phenomenon, namely the procurers and the traders. The early results of this policy are reflected in the tables below. There are no official estimations of the extent of prostitution and trafficking in Israel. However, in a 1997 research conducted by the Israel Women's Network, the total number of prostitutes in Israel was estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000. NGOs estimate that close to 3,000 women are trafficked to Israel each year (Israel Woman's Network 1997, 2- 3).

2. The Legal Framework

Recent events, such as the publication of a report by Amnesty International concerning the trafficking of women from the former USSR into Israel's sex industry, have triggered some change in public and governmental attitude with regards to the treatment of women who engage in prostitution in Israel. This has been reflected - among other things - by various legislative initiatives which have been pushed forward in the Knesset. The **Women's Equal Rights Law – 1951** was reformed in early 2000, with an explicit inclusion of the right of a woman "to be protected from violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking". More specifically, an amendment to the **Penal Law – 1977** was passed in July 2000 concerning prostitution and trafficking, explicitly prohibiting trafficking in people and allowing imprisonment for up to 16 years. The amendment further stipulates that the punishment for procurement and other related offenses is to be increased where aggravating circumstances exist, or in cases where minors are involved (a dividing line being drawn between minors under 14 or over, the former leading to double the original length of imprisonment, the latter to an additional 2-5 years to the original imprisonment duration). Moreover, the amendment provides for an extension of the offense previously under section 202 - making the causing of a person to leave his or her state of residence (regardless of what state that is) in order to engage him or her in prostitution a criminal offence and increasing the maximal punishment for that offense to 10 years.

Increased awareness and alarm from State authorities is also reflected in the establishment of a Parliamentary Investigative Committee on trafficking of women, in June 2000, as well as in the establishment of an intra-ministerial committee for outlining recommendations to face the phenomenon of trafficking, both on the criminal level and of the level of treating the women victims of the phenomenon. During its deliberations, the committee examined the possibility of establishing a central hostel where women who had been trafficked could stay during the period of giving evidence and testifying in court. The committee has also raised the possibility of having the governmental Legal Aid represent trafficked women (who are all illegal aliens) in court proceedings, after it was revealed that procurers often hire lawyers to release the women and prevent their deportation in order to continue using them for prostitution. The committee's report and recommendations were due shortly after the conclusion of this Report.

On the side of law enforcement agencies, the State Attorney has directed the various districts to take the testimony of trafficked women in a pre-hearing, so as not to prolong their stay in the country. In early July 2001 the State Attorney's office has distributed guidelines explaining the handling of the issue by the various State authorities. Later that month the Minister of Internal Security has convened a one-day seminar on trafficking, with the presence of the Attorney General, the State Attorney, Members of the Knesset, police officials and NGOs representatives.

On the international level, Israel plans to sign the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish the Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), and is considering joining other new international conventions against trafficking, such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000).

3. Evaluation of the Actual Situation

As an expression of a stronger commitment to combat trafficking in women, new Police internal directives were issued in June 2000 aimed at insuring the stronger enforcement of the law. Among these directives are instructions for every regional and special police investigation unit in Israel to conduct at least one thorough investigation per year in the realm of trafficking of women. Another directive encourages cooperation with international police forces through the naming of 8 police representatives across the world, cooperation with Interpol and national police forces, as well as with foreign police representatives working in Israel. One of the immediate results of these directives can be traced in the significant increase in the number of investigations relating to the issue of prostitution, which have been opened in the last few months. Furthermore, the police points to a more conciliatory and victim-oriented approach towards foreign women working illegally as prostitutes who come forward to testify against procurement or related crimes. Instead of being arrested and immediately deported from Israel, the women are currently released from prison and given support until court proceedings can take place. During July 2001, the police financed the stay of 30 women in hotels and in hostels, in anticipation of their testimony in court.

Data regarding the enforcement of the law in this area confirms the need for firmer commitment, while showing increased enforcement over the years. Between 1997-2000, the trial was over in only 17% (273 out of 1,606) of police files that were opened for prostitution-related crimes (including procurement, solicitation to prostitute and to engage in prostitution, keeping a place of prostitution, kidnapping for the purpose of prostitution, and trafficking since mid 2000). Of the more specifically male dominated crime of procurement only 180 files were opened in the first place, and 25 were over by July 2001, as can be seen in the following table. No data exists as to the rate of convictions and sentences. On the other hand, the following table does show increased enforcement, reflected in the numbers of files opened throughout the years. This is particularly evident when comparing the 1997 data with 1999-2000 in the categories of procurement and keeping a house of prostitution. Probably most significant in terms of increased awareness and severe attitude is the data concerning the new offence of trafficking, showing that 25 files were opened in a period of only 7 months. It is also reflected in the data concerning arrests, particularly detention pending trial, as seen in Table 3 below.

Table 1 - Breakdown of Criminal Files in Prostitution Related Crimes

	1997			1998			1999			2000			By August 5,2001		
	Files	At the Prose-cution	Trial Over	Files	At the Prose-cution	Trial Over	Files	At the Prose-cution	Trial Over	Files	At the Prose-cution	Trial Over	Files	At the Prose-cution	Trial Over
Offence															
Procurement	23	3	9	45	5	12	42	14	6	61	35	3	32	10	0
Solicitation to Engage in Prostitution	14	3	4	18	2	4	24	6	0	19	8	3	9	2	0
Solicitation to Prostitute	11	0	4	14	2	2	17	4	5	15	8	0	7	1	0
Keeping a House of Prostitution	227	24	98	284	83	58	423	201	39	292	150	10	195	57	0
Kidnapping for the Purpose of Prostitution	14	2	5	16	3	5	16	3	2	22	4	3	12	3	0
Trafficking*										1	0	1	25	9	0
Total	289	32	120	377	95	81	522	228	52	410	205	20	280	82	0

*The new offence of Trafficking came into effect in July 2000

Source Israel police

The following table shows the gender distribution of suspects in prostitution related offences:

Table 2 - Files opened in Prostitution Related Crimes, 1996-1998

	1996			1997			1998		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Offence									
Procurement									
number	30	6	36	21	3	24	36	14	50
percent	83 3	16 7	100	87 5	12 5	100	72	28	100
Solicitation to Engage in Prostitution									
number	9	2	11	4	3	7	8	7	15
percent	81 8	18 2	100	57 1	42 9	100	53 3	46 6	100
Solicitation to Prostitute									
number	15	4	19	9	3	12	9	3	12
percent	78 9	21	100	75	25	100	75	25	100
Keeping a House of Prostitution									
number	90	127	217	106	118	224	100	169	269
percent	41 4	58 5	100	47 3	52 7	100	37 1	62 8	100
Solicitation of Minors									
number	22	0	22				0	1	1
percent	100		100					100	100
Publication of Obscene Materials									
number	4	2	6	3	1	4	3	2	5
percent	66 6	33 4	100	75	25	100	60	40	100

Source Israel Police

The following table shows the number of arrests made in each category of prostitution related crimes, as well as the number of cases in which suspects were put into detention pending trial. It should be explained that a new law, passed in 1996 and came into effect in May 1997, had severely limited the option of criminal arrests in general and of detention pending trial in particular. Of special interest is the relatively high rate of detention pending trial in the new category of trafficking. This policy was approved by a Supreme Court ruling from October 2000, which stressed the severity of the offence, and affirmed its basis for detention pending trial.

Table 3- Distribution of Arrests in Prostitution Related Crimes

	1998		1999		2000		By July 11, 2001	
	Total Arrests	Detention Pending Trial	Total Arrests	Detention Pending Trial	Total Arrests	Detention Pending Trial	Total Arrests	Detention Pending Trial
Offence								
Procurement	30	1	23	1	19	2	0	0
Solicitation to Engage in Prostitution	14	4	18	0	15	1	13	5
Solicitation to Prostitute	9	1	11	0	17	2	6	6
Keeping a House of Prostitution	115	1	81	3	106	2	63	0
Kidnapping for the Purpose of Prostitution	8	5	6	1	22	18	2	1
trafficking	0	0	0	0	2	2	33	20
Total	176	12	139	5	181	27	117	32

Source: Israel police

4. Involvement of Minors in Prostitution

The issue of minors' involvement in prostitution is dealt with in the amendment to the general provisions of the **Penal Law – 1977.** As mentioned above, the involvement of a minor is considered an aggravating circumstance of the crime committed, in effect imposing a heavier sentence on the perpetrator. Most significant is the amendment's handling of the clients, in innovating a prohibition to engage in prostitution with a minor, punishable by a relatively severe three years imprisonment. Another notable addition is a special prohibition in section 208, punishable by three years in prison, against permitting a minor (defined as a person between 2-17 years old) who is under one's supervision to live in or to frequent a place of prostitution. Regarding the involvement of minors who are forced into prostitution, and more generally the commercial sexual exploitation of children, a fundamental change has been effected with the passing of a 1998 amendment to section 15(b) of the **Penal Law – 1997**, designed to combat outgoing "sex tourism" with minors. The amendment establishes an extraterritorial jurisdiction for prostitution-related crimes against minors, and makes it possible to put the perpetrators on trial in Israel for crimes committed outside of it, regardless of whether or not such acts would be considered crimes in the places where the acts were committed. On a more procedural level, the amendment also shifts the burden of proof on the accused to prove his claim of unawareness as to the prostitute's age.

All these provisions seem to be in line with a stricter attitude towards involvement of minors in the sexual industry and a stronger commitment to protect minors from abuse and exploitation. One should note the gender-neutral language introduced in the law's provisions that deal with prostitution.

5. Rehabilitation Programs for Women and Girls in Distress

There are no rehabilitation programs specifically geared for girls who are sexually exploited. The major general rehabilitation program for girls is the Service for Girls in Distress under the Ministry of Labor and Welfare. This service treats childless, mentally sane adolescent girls aged 13-21 in the Jewish sector, and up to age 25 in the Arab sector. Overall, the Service has treated 11,800 girls in 1997, more than double the number in 1993.

The service suffers from chronic lack of sufficient budget. In his 1998 Annual Report, the State Comptroller severely criticized the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, who finances 75% of the social workers' operational costs, and the government in general, for not allocating sufficient budgets to enable a reasonable level of operation. The report found that the average load of girls for every full time social worker was more than one hundred girls, and in some cases the load was nearly doubles that. Even more alarming was the fact that the total number of girls in distress was estimated by the Service at 21,000, almost half of who could not be treated at all for lack of resources. The situation is particularly difficult with respect to Arab girls; it was estimated by the superintendent on treating Arab girls that 10,000 need treatment, while only 2,100 are receiving it.

Article 7

Political and Public Life

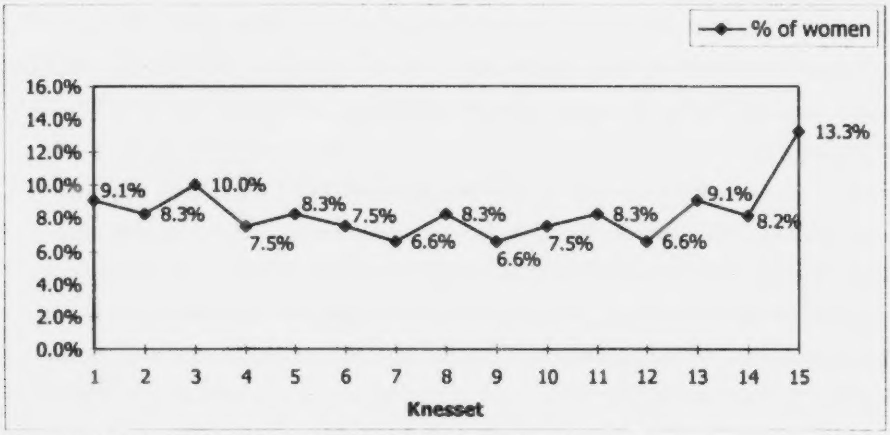
1. Women in Political life in Israel

In contrast to the conventional assumption that a woman's entry into politics conflicts with her domestic role, statistics show that women who succeed in Israeli politics are those with families and children. Thus for example, 94% of the women elected in the 1998 local elections have children, and 82% of them are married. It must be mentioned, however, that the average age of the women elected is 48.

2. Women's Representation in the Knesset

The recent 1999 elections for the 15th Knesset marked an improvement in the overall representation of women in the Knesset, with 14 women elected – that is 11.6% of Knesset members (this number of women MKs has increased to 16, with the resignations of two male MK and the appointment of women in their places). In addition, for the first time an Arab woman was elected to the Knesset, Hussniya Jabara of Meretz.

Chart 1 - Women MKs throughout the Years, 1948-2001



Source: Yishai, Yael. 1997. *Between the Flag and the Banner*, http://knesset.gov.il

Notwithstanding this improvement, When compared to other countries, Israel still has room to improve in respect to women's representation in the legislature. One possible explanation may be found in the fact that since the early 80s, there has been no woman MKs representatives within religious parties. With 28 seats occupied by religious parties out of a total of 120 (one more than during the 14th Knesset), close to 25% of the places in the Israeli parliament are almost by definition closed to women. At the same time, the 3 biggest non-religious parties have exhibited a significant increase in the rate of women MKs elected, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 1 - Women elected to Knesset, by Party, 1992, 1996 and 1999

	Number of Men	Number of Women	% of Women in Party
1999			
Labor	23	3	12%
Likud	16	3	16%
Meretz	6	4	40%
1996			
Labor	31	3	9%
Likud	30	2	6%
Meretz	7	2	22%
1992			
Labor	40	4	9%
Likud	30	2	6%
Ratz	4	2	33%

Source Israel's Women Network

2.1. Women as Knesset members

Despite the fact that there still has never been a woman Knesset Speaker, the current Knesset does have two women serving as Deputy Speakers. The present Knesset has assigned two women to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee. Beyond this, three women head other Knesset Committees, and three women head three sub-committees.

Significantly, according to the Knesset Statistical Report, which quantifies the legislative and parliamentary activity of different Knesset members, it is evident that women's legislative production is disproportionately superior to their representation in the Knesset. Generally, while women constituted only 7.5% of the legislators in the 14th Knesset, they were responsible for 15% of the laws passed. Women MKs were present on 90% Knesset deliberations days, while the average MK participation stands at 77%.

The significance of women's presence in the legislature is clearly seen in the following data: Between 30-50% of the bills put forward by women MKs during the 13th and 14th Knessets involved issues concerning the status of women.

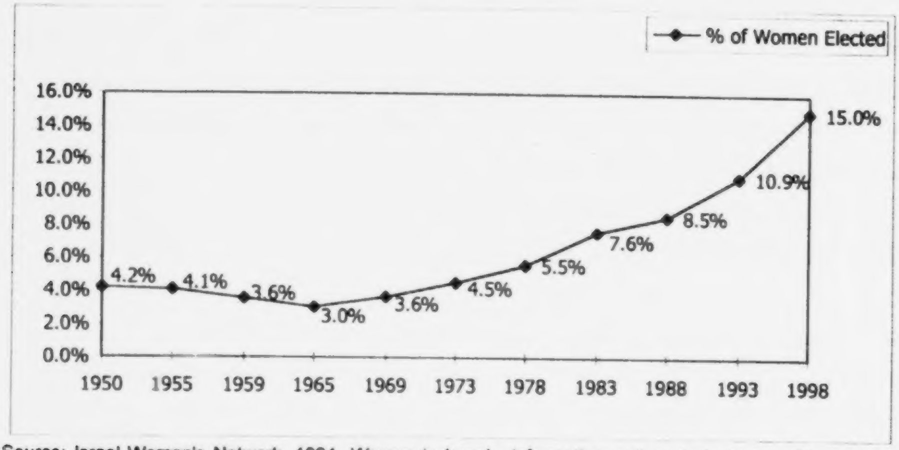
3. Women in Government

In the 1996-99 cabinet, only one of 18 ministers was a woman and three women held the position of general-director of a government ministry. The recent cabinet of PM Ehud Barak had two women ministers and one deputy-minister out of a total of 23 ministers within the cabinet. Following the special election for Prime Minister in early 2001 the present cabinet has three women ministers (out of a total of 26 ministers within the cabinet), with another precedent of a woman Deputy Minister of Defense.

4. Women in Local Authorities

The recent 1998 local elections saw the election of 240 women, making up 15% of the total, a jump of 40% in comparison with the 10.9% elected as a result of the 1993 elections. Overall, women are currently present in 70% of the local authorities. This quantitative evolution can be attributed at least partly to a qualitative change in the way women have entered the local authorities - through the use of independent parties, many of them set up and headed by women.

Chart 2 - Women Elected to Local Councils, 1950-1998



Source: Israel Women's Network, 1994, *Women in Israel - information and analysis*; Union of Local Authorities in Israel.

While up until the last elections, few women had served as heads of local councils, and only one had been a mayor of a city, the recent 1998 local elections witnessed an important evolution with the election of two women as mayors of fairly large and central cities (Herzlia and Netanya). Twenty-nine women serve as deputy mayors, and two women were elected to head regional authorities. It must be mentioned however, that these achievements relate to the Jewish population of Israel. Only one Arab woman to date has served as a head of a local council since the establishment of the State (Violet Khoury, elected in 1972 to be the head of the Kfar Yassif Local Council), and in the 1998 elections two Arab women were elected to municipal councils.

Another point worth mentioning with respect to local authorities is the **Local Councils Law (Advisor on the Status of Women) - 2000**, as detailed under article 2 above.

5. Women in the Civil Service

5.1. Ranks of Women in the Civil Service

The rate of women among the top three ranks of the senior staff of the Civil Service's four main classifications – which compose the main source for administration managers - remains relatively low. In 1997, when women made up 61% of all civil servants, that rate was still less than 15%, and in October 1999, when women made up 61% of all civil servants, the rate stood at 16.4%. Women's low level of representation in the top echelons of the administration stands out yet more when contrasted with their representation in the lowest ranks (i.e. 8th rank and below), where their overrepresentation only seems to be growing: from 66% of all workers in 1997, to 71% in 1999. Between 1993-1999, not one woman occupied the highest rank of the administrative or the technical classification, two of the most prestigious classifications in the service.

5.2. Tenders in the Civil Service

The method of appointments to the Civil Service through internal and external tenders is explained in the previous Report. While the increase of women's participation in internal job-tenders in the Civil Service, both as candidates and appointees, is quite constant, the situation in public tenders is far less positive. Beyond the overall decline in the number of female candidates and appointees through the tenders system, the trend which consistently tended to appoint women at a slightly higher rate relative to the rate of women who presented their candidacy was reversed in recent years. For example, while 38% of the candidates for public tenders in 1998 were women, they constituted only 36% of the appointees. All this is in spite of the affirmative action provisions in the 1996.

6. Women in Key Positions within Israel's Economy and Public Life

Women's general advancement in the past few years is also reflected in other key positions within the economy and public life occupied by women. Thus, for example, in the Ministry of Finance, the Supervisor on State's Income and the Supervisor on the Financial Market, Savings and Insurance are both women. In addition, women serve in positions of Chief Scientist in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Science and the Ministry of Environment. Another precedent appointment has been the appointment of Ms. Orit Adato, former *Chen* (IDF Women's Corps) Commander to the position of Chief Commander of Israel's Prisons Service in May 2000.

7. The Judiciary

The number of women judges continues to increase, this in conjunction with the rising number of judges in general. In January 2001, there were 200 female judges (including three Christians and one Muslim female judges) out of a total of 459 judges, meaning that women constitute 43.6% of the judiciary in Israel. A comparison with 1999 data indicates that 14 of the 16 new appointments since 1999 were of women judges. Furthermore, the number of women Justices in the Supreme Court has impressively reached a proportion of 28.5% (4 out of 14 Supreme Court Justices) in 2000. In contrast, in more peripheral areas of the judicial field, such as labor courts, where lay people operate as public-representatives (representing employees and employers' unions) side by side with professional judges, only 12% of the public-representatives in 1999 were women. Significantly, women compose the majority of professional labor judges (60% of the judges, and 71% of the registrars).

Women's relatively large representation in the judiciary is also evidenced in the public sector of the legal profession and is clearly related to it. The present State Attorney is a woman, and her predecessor was the first woman to serve in this role and was later appointed to the Supreme Court. In August 2000, in the State Attorney and the Attorney General offices, there were 325 women lawyers compared with 148 men, and 318 women public service attorneys compared with 163 men. In addition, six of the eight District Attorneys were women, as well as the heads of the Criminal Department, the Criminal Department for Special Issues, the Civil Department, the Labor Conflicts Department, the Fiscal Department, and many other senior positions ranking high in the Civil Service, in much higher proportions that any other ministry or Civil Service unit. All in all, 16 of the top 20 positions within the public sector of the legal profession are women.

8. Government Corporations

Data submitted by the Government Corporations Authority indicates a clear improvement over the years in women's general presence among board of directors, but far less encouraging data regarding women's participation as Board Chairs: in September 1999, 40% of the directors were women (235 compared to 364), a significant rise even from 1996, when 25.6% of the directors were women. However, there is still only one woman who serves as Chair of the Board of Directors, compared to 50 men, and only 8 women serve as director-generals of government corporations, compared to 73 men – data that shows no improvement in this realm over the years.

9. Women in the Military

9.1. The Legal Framework

In January 1999, a bill to amend the **Defense Service Law [Consolidated Version] – 1986**, providing for equal military service for men and women passed its first reading, and a year late it became law. This legislative change - which leaves no excuse for the continued differentiation between men's and women's military positions – is aimed to ensuring substantial equality in opportunities for placement and positions within the military, as well as in duties that accompany such positions which are designated by the Minister of Defense, according to the law. By enabling the army to demand a longer period of service from women who volunteer to the newly opened jobs, the army has *de facto* admitted its willingness to place women in such positions. This opening of new positions to women includes those previously refered to as "combat positions", and the Chief of Staff has already issued instructions for inclusion of female soldiers in all combat areas, based solely on their qualifications. The only type of military volition which remains closed to women's recruitment is infantry combat, as it involves specific physical qualifications which, according to military officials, are beyond women's capabilities. This inclusion is within the law's legitimate criteria for exemption.

This legislative "revolution" is clearly an answer to and a reflection of the opinion among the young women recruits themselves. According to IDF surveys of current women recruits, 78% of them believe that combat positions should be opened for women, and 70% believe that women should be allowed to serve in combat areas (such as Lebanon, before the Israeli withdrawal in May 2000).

9.1.1. Implementation of the Miller Case within the Air Force and beyond

The army has continued to take steps to implement the conclusions reached in the decision regarding the landmark *Miller* case, discussed in the previous Report. Female candidates have joined all pilot training courses opened since the decision was rendered, and the first female navigator graduated in December 1998.

The guidelines and instructions to adapt army policy regarding women's service to the reality of women combat pilots – including, amongst others, provisions for women pilot candidates to serve additional time and perform reserve duty, instructions regarding pregnancy, the potential performance of combat duty or duties in hostile territory according to the decision of the Commanding Officer of the Air Force, under the advisement of the Chief of Staff – have in fact served as a prelude to the present process whereby the whole organizational framework of women's military service is undergoing fundamental change. Indeed, changes are noticeable at all levels and in every realm, from the actual recruitment of women to the placement process, including the nature and length of service and there is a genuine willingness in the IDF to adopt gender- related changes. As of the draft of summer 2000, women recruits are to undergo a process of pre-selection just like men recruits, enabling them to make an advance decision on their preferences and allowing the army to fully assess the recruits' qualifications for their most efficient placement. Thus, women receive booklets delineating all the new occupations that are open to them, including both combat and non-combat options. According to IDF surveys, 37% of the women new recruits already express interest in serving as pilots, a similar rate as that of the men recruits.

During 1999, women already began training in combat related occupations, such as in border surveillance, as combat task officers, and in armor divisions – this following the Chief of Staff's instructions on the inclusion of female soldiers in all combat areas, as mentioned above. The training for these positions is the same for men and women, and women who volunteer for these positions will have to sign up for a 30 months service (compared to the mandatory 21 months service for women, and 36 months service for men).

In addition, a recent decision, approved by the Chief of Staff, concludes that women will serve in the reserve forces until they reach the age of 38 (30 for women in combat positions). Pregnant women and mothers will be exempted from this reserve duty.

Within the military's special preparation and arrangement for women's entrance into all military jobs, particularly notable are the adjustment what is known of as "strain ruler" to women's physiological capabilities as well as the adaptation of specific military equipment (such as shoes) to women's needs.

9.2. Women and Men in the Military - Some Data

9.2.1. Women and Men Officers

Table 2 - Proportion of Women among Officers, 1985, 1995 and 2000 -

Rank	1985 % Women	1995 % Women	2000 % Women
Major General	0	0	0
Brigadier	0	0	0
Brigadier General	0	0.8	1
Colonel	1.5	2.2	3
Lieutenant Colonel	4.6	10.3	8
Major	13.6	21.2	19
Captain	12.1	22.5	19
First Lieutenant	15.3	37.3	29
Second Lieutenant		66.6	41

Source: IDF Spokesperson

The following tables compare data from 1995 and 2000, regarding the amount of time men and women serve in a certain rank before being promoted, and at what average age they receive these promotions. The comparison shows continuing differences between men and women, as the latter must invest significantly more time before being promoted to higher ranks.

Table 3 - Average Seniority (months) before Promotion - Women Compared to Men, 1995, 2000

	1995				2000	
	General Army + Personnel		Rest of IDF*		All IDF*	
Advancement	Women Officers	Men Officers	Women Officers	Men Officers	Women Officers	Men Officers
Lt. Colonel- Colonel	135.2	79.9		78.1	96	76.8
Major- Lt. Colonel	90.1	75.4	101.4	69.7	98.4	69.6
Captain- Major	49.6	48.5	50.4	48.6	48	45.6
First Lt. - Captain	40	31.9	37.9	31.4	39.6	28.8

* including Male Combat Positions

Source: IDF Spokesperson

Table 4 - Average Age of Women when Receiving Promotions Compared to Men, 1995, 2000

Advancement	1995				2000	
	General Army + Personnel		Rest of IDF*		All IDF*	
	Women Officers	Men Officers	Women Officers	Men Officers	Women Officers	Men Officers
Lt. Colonel- Colonel	48**	40.1		39.4		
Major- Lt. Colonel	35.4	35.9	37.3	35.3	35.7	34
Captain- Major	28.5	30.4	29.1	30.1	27.8	28.5
First Lt.- Captain	23.7	24.2	24.6	24.9	24	24.3

* Including Male Combat Positions

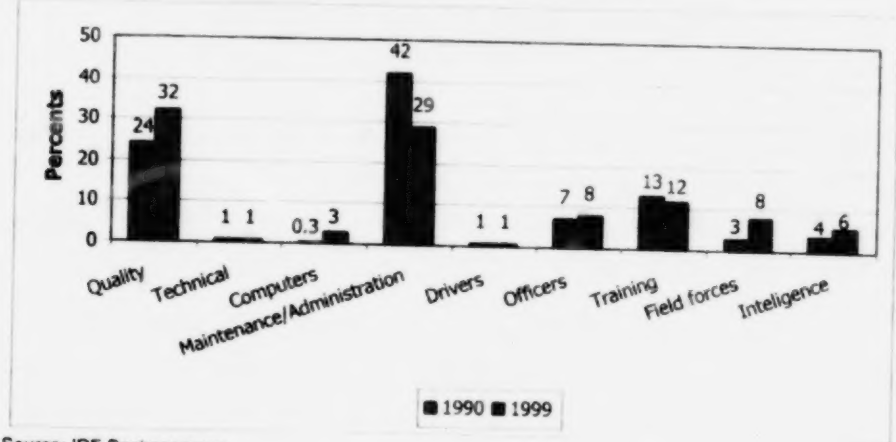
** One of them received her title at an advanced age

Source: IDF Spokesperson

9.2.2. Distribution of Men and Women among Jobs in the Military

On the level of job stratification along gender lines – the fuller integration of women within the army has made clear headway. While 70% of the jobs open to women in the late seventies were in clerical positions, in 1999 – prior to the complete opening up of most military jobs to women, less than a quarter of the women soldiers served in clerical positions. The following chart depicts some other data regarding the profound changes in the distribution of women among jobs in the military, throughout the last decade. Note that the "quality" job category includes jobs that require higher personal qualifications and longer training courses.

Chart 3 - Women in the I.D.F, by Job Category, 1990, 1999



Source: IDF Spokesperson

9.2.3. Women Scientists and Engineers in the I.D.F.

An in depth examination of women as scientists and engineers in the I.D.F., appears in a recent report by the National Council for the Promotion of Women in Science and Technology. The report reveals that female officers in engineering roles are mostly in the lower ranks, both professionally and formally (30% of academic professional officers, but only 0.4% senior academic officers; 29% of lieutenants, 0% of colonels), as can be seen in the following table:

Table 5 - Engineers in Career Service, by Rank (percents)

	Academic Professional		Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lt Colone	Colonel	Brigadier
	Officer	Senior Officer						
Men	70	99.6	71	94	88	97	100	100
Women	30	0.4	29	6	12	3	0	0

Source: Women in Science and Technology in ISRAEL, 2000 National Report

The Women's Corps in the I.D.F. has initiated several programs intended to promote female soldiers and officers and to support them in their careers. These programs include workshops on empowerment, women's status and career planning. The Women's Corps is also responsible for special programs, designed to encourage prospective female candidates to go into technological careers. However, the number of women receiving deferments in order to undertake technological studies before their military service is low and has actually declined over the past two years, as depicted in the following table:

Table 6 - Women as Percent of Total Deferments Granted to Make Possible Pre-Service Engineering Studies, Various Years

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Total Deferments	500	460	530	480	560
Women as Percent of Total Deferments	10%	10%	13%	9%	6%

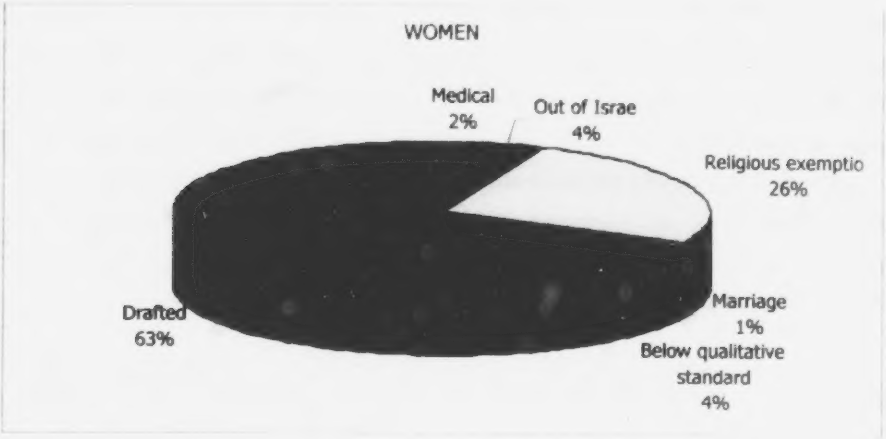
Source: Women in Science and Technology in ISRAEL, 2000 National Report

9.2.4. Exemptions from the Military

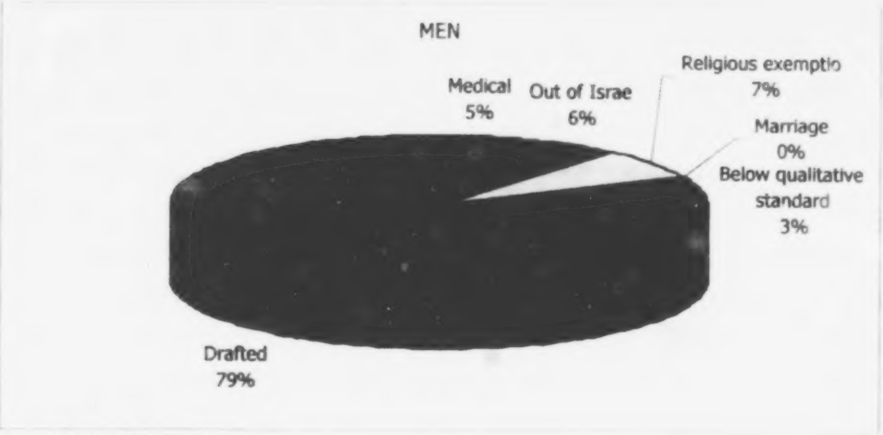
The next chart portrays the distribution of reasons for exemptions from the Military for men and women. Overall, the rate of exempted persons is higher for women than for men (37% compared to 21%), mainly because many more women are discharged from the army on religious grounds (26% compared to 7% of the men).

Chart 4 - Exemptions from I.D.F, by Gender and Reasons, 1998

A. Women



B. Men



Source: IDF Spokesperson

9.3. The *Chen* – Women's Corps

Since 1997, as part of the overall Gender reform process within the army, the posts of *Chen* (the Women's Corps, see previous Report) officers within each unit were virtually abolished. Similar to male recruits, women soldiers are now subject to the commandment of units' officers for all purposes, including disciplinary and judicial matters. Regional *Chen* officers remain, serving as a resort to female soldiers who face problems such as sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, or gynecological problems. In subjecting female soldiers to the direct supervision of the unit officers, in a similar manner to that of the male soldiers, another barrier to women's full integration in the army has been crossed.

9.4. Sexual Harassment in the Army

Sexual harassment of women within the army remains a problem. Yet, parallel to the ongoing revolution in women's entry into all military jobs mentioned above, the army is undergoing a process of change in its treatment of sexual harassment. Among the events which have prompted this change have been the enactment of the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law – 1998**, the *Galili* and *Mordechai* affairs discussed under Article 5, and the intensive pressure exerted by the Knesset Committee on the Advancement of Women as well as other women's organizations.

Expression of this change has been found, amongst other things, in the publication of a semi-annual report on sexual harassment in the army, which includes the number of complaints and their outcomes, thus precluding any possibility of cover-up. Furthermore, various services, such as a 24 hours hotline for sexual harassment complaints and a program in which victims of sexual harassment are provided with the counseling of a *Chen* officer, have been operating since 1996.

A comprehensive program aimed at dealing with the phenomenon of sexual harassment in the army which has also been implemented since 1996 has undergone adjustments to conform to the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law - 1998**, with most instructions emanating from the Chief of Staff's office coming into effect in April 2000. These instructions provide a broad definition of sexual harassment, emphasizing that it may be verbal or physical, and that it may involve explicit as well as implicit exploitation of an authoritative position. They also obligate commanders to report all instances of grave physical harassment (such as rape or forced indecent act) to the military police, even if the victim refuses to complain. In 1999, the army began screening a movie on sexual harassment to all new female recruits, which explains the differences between legitimate courtship and sexual harassment. The movie was to be screened to all new male recruits as well.

The policy has borne fruits. The past few years have witnessed an increase with respect to complaints of sexual harassment in the army. More complaints – 54.7% in 1999 – were transferred to the military police instead of being dealt with through disciplinary proceedings within the units. The new instructions further mandate a maximum length of time (45 days) that the investigative procedures in harassment cases should not exceed. Most significant has been the change in policy regarding the punishments imposed on career soldiers convicted of sexual harassment, who are now expected to be discharged from the army. Indeed, in the first half of 1999, out of 35 convictions in sexual harassment of career soldiers, 30 were discharged from service. In general, it can be said that sexual harassment is no longer trivialized by the military, and is viewed not just as a "women's problem", but rather as part of a larger social problem.

10. Women in the Police

10.1 The Legal Framework

As in the army, significant changes were also made regarding women in the Israeli Police since the Initial Report.

Police regulations prescribe that no difference should be made in the recruitment of men and women within the police force. In addition, they insure - in principle – that all positions within the police force will be open to women and that they be paid salaries on par with those paid to men with equivalent positions.

Current Police recruitment practices are largely a result of a 1996 petition presented to the High Court of Justice by women who contended that they had suffered from discrimination in the context of their recruitment and promotion within the Israel Police Force. The High Court of Justice ordered the Police Force to explain the discrimination against women recruits and come-up with a plan to promote the equality of women within the force. As a direct result of this Court injunction, a committee was set up to recommend measures intended to promote effective equality for women within the Israel Police. Among the recommended measures:

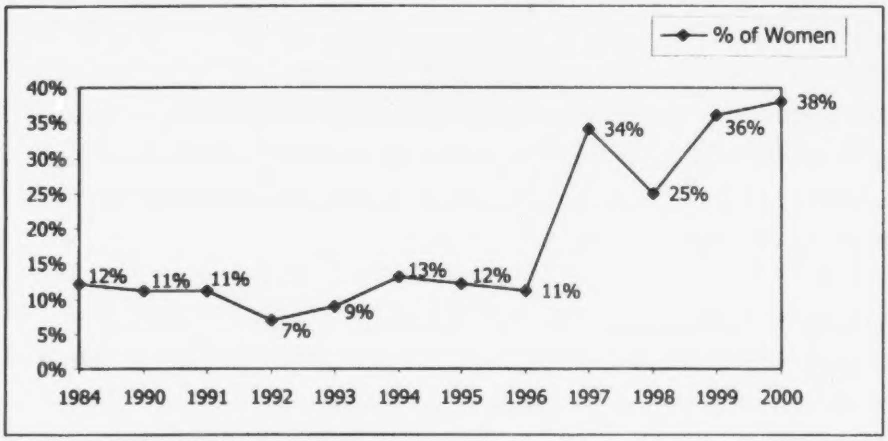
- A declaration of principles guiding the police force, underlining a clear intent on its part to promote equal opportunities for women
- Raising the numbers of women serving in the force to at least 25% within a decade
- Finding appropriate women candidates for designated positions, encouraging specifically the recruitment and promotion of women in ranks and positions where women are under-represented
- Locating female officers in order to fill territorial-command positions
- Setting up a committee overseeing the application of the above measures

In addition, internal instruction giving priority in recruitment and in promotions to veterans of IDF combat units were abolished. In April 1999, the High Court of Justice gave its final decision in the case, accepting in essence the police position showing the significant advances made in promoting women within the Israeli Police.

10.2. Women in the Police – Field Data

Altogether, women make up 23% of the police force, and 21% of the permanent police force. Since 1996, largely as a result of the aforementioned reforms, the proportion of women serving in the police force has continually increased, in accordance with the substantial increase in the rate of women among new recruits, as can be seen in the following chart:

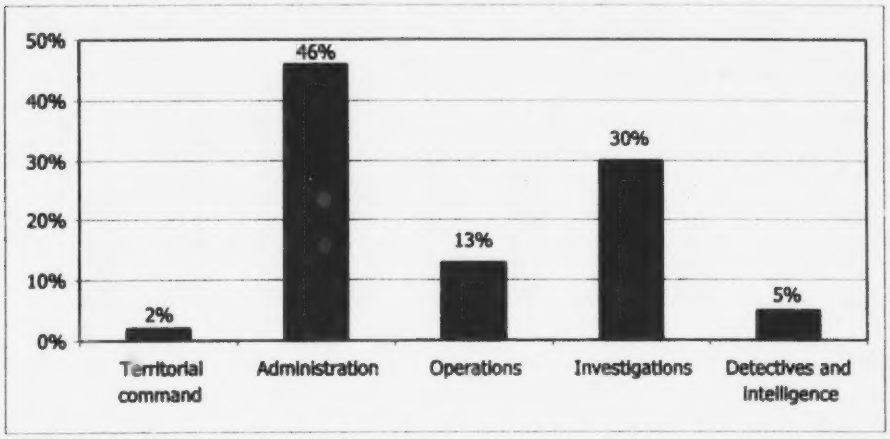
Chart 5 - Recruitment of Women, Various Years



Source: Israel Police Unpublished Data, 2000.

However, the increase in the proportion of women in the police has not affected all positions equally. Of 178 different positions available within the force, 70 have few or no women within their ranks. Women are strongly represented in administrative positions (where they make up 46% of the force) and are well represented in the investigations department (where they make up 30% of the force), but are noticeably under-represented in positions of territorial command as well as in intelligence and detective units (where they make up only 2% and 5% respectively).

Chart 6 - Percentage of Women in Police Career Service, 2000

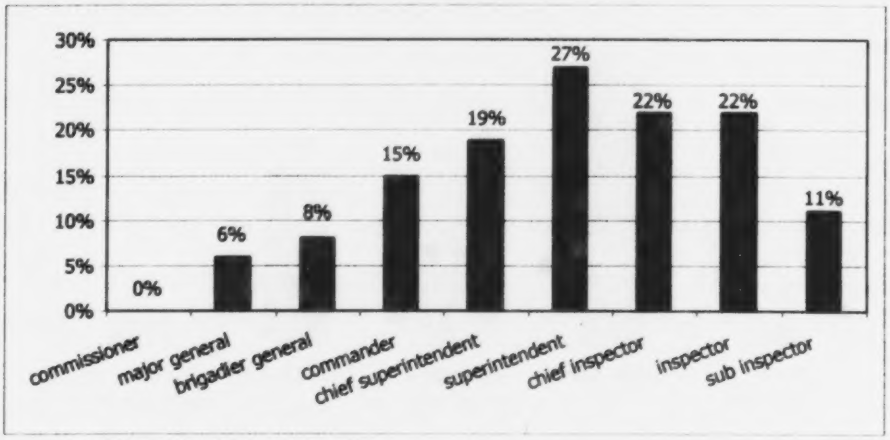


Source: Israel Police Unpublished Data, 2000.

The above numbers indicate that women systematically serve in positions which are characterized by psychological or behavioral sensitivity, in addition to traditional clerical work. In contrast to this, they are seldom present in patrol positions requiring the application of physical force – for example, scattering protests, capturing criminals, etc. Although the police have tried to justify this policy, the Kremnitzer Committee (an investigative committee on police violence, operated in 1995/96) has recommended the inclusion of women within the active police force as a means to soften the contact between police and citizens.

Furthermore, women seem to be under-represented in the higher ranks of the police force while being over-represented in the lower echelons of the force. Indeed, only one woman today serves in a position of police-station commander, and none serves as district or sub-district commander to date.

Chart 7 - Percentage of Women Officers in the Police, 2000



Source: Israel Police Unpublished Data, 2000.

10.3. Women in the Border Police

The number of women in the Border Police is continually increasing. Of the women serving in the Border Police at present, 23% serve in combat-related positions where they perform combat missions like their male counterparts, 38% of the women serve at different border-passages as border controllers, 18% serve as guards in public places, performing standard security duties and 21% serve in administrative positions.

10.4. Sexual Harassment within the Police Force

Even before the passing of the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law** in 1998, the Police sought to act against the phenomenon of sexual harassment within its ranks. Among the different measures adopted were the enactment of directives expressing the responsibilities and duties of the police in dealing with sexual harassment cases within its ranks, activities of information and explanation in the midst of the police force (including the publication of reports on sexual harassment within the police and reports of inappropriate treatment of harassment cases), and an improvement in the treatment and punishment of harassment cases, including both judicial and administrative measures.

Beyond these measures, during 2000 a survey was conducted to evaluate the extent of the sexual harassment phenomenon in the police. Questionnaires were distributed to all policewomen, with a return rate of 28%. The survey's results were published and disseminated at all levels of the police force – as well as in the national press - thus reinforcing consciousness of the widespread nature of the phenomenon of sexual harassment. Among the survey's findings:

- 12.5% of the women serving in the police have been exposed to some form of sexual harassment, with 3.3% exposed to actual sexual assault
- sexual harassment by superiors was less wide-spread, though more damaging than sexual harassment by colleagues
- women-victims of sexual harassment rarely deal with their plight by turning to outside help

The extent of sexual harassment within the police did not exceed that of other professions, or of other police forces worldwide.

Article 8

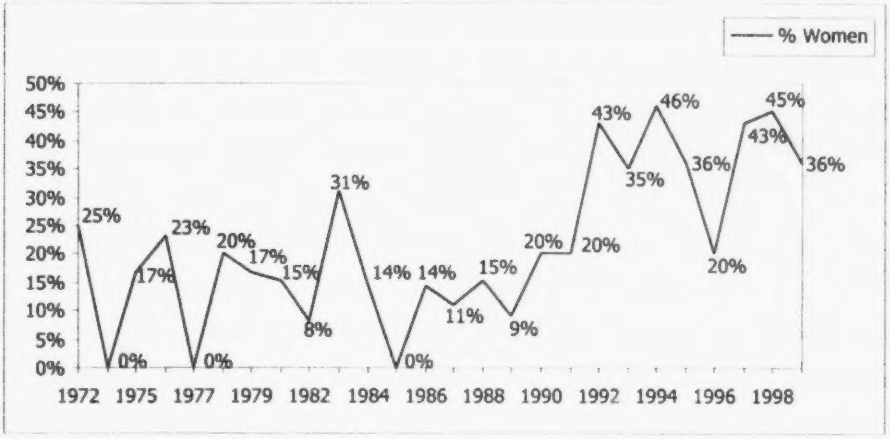
International Representation and Participation

1. Women's Representation in the Foreign Service

The issue of international representation is an integral part of the discussion regarding the status of women in the State of Israel.

First, it should be noted that in recent years more women enter the Foreign Service as cadets, as exhibited in Chart 1.

Chart 1 - Percentage of Women New Recruits, 1972-1999



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Foreign Ministry has noted that the percentage of women, taking the test for the Cadet Course, remained the same percentage of women admitted for the course.

The Foreign Ministry and the diplomatic missions are composed of an Administrative Wing and a Diplomatic Wing (which, in it, consists of an Administrative-External Section and a Political Section). The rate of women within the Political Section of the Diplomatic Wing is considerably lower than their rate in other parts of the Foreign Service (20% compared to 55%, in 2000).

The following table further details the rate of women within the Diplomatic Wing of the Foreign Service, by ranks:

Table 1 - Representation of Women in the Foreign Service - Diplomatic Wing, 2001

Diplomatic Wing			
Political Section			
	Men	Women	% Women
Senior Ranks			
Ambassador	29	0	0%
Minister	87	9	9%
Minister Counsellor	86	25	23%
Junior Ranks			
Adviser	67	16	19%
First Secretary	70	26	27%
Second Secretary	10	6	38%
Administrative (External) Section			
	Men	Women	% Women
Senior Ranks			
Ambassador	4	1	20%
Minister	17	6	26%
Minister Counsellor	15	13	46%
Junior Ranks			
Adviser	33	50	60%
First Secretary	34	31	48%
Second Secretary	6	26	81%

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Table 2 - Representation of Women in the Foreign Service, Various positions, 2001

Civil Service - Total	Men	Women	% Women
Deputy Director General	17	0	0%
Department Heads	2	1	33%
Sub-Department Heads	19	2	10%
Division Heads	73	23	24%
Heads of Missions	87	11	11%

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2. Women Representatives and Independent Experts in International Organizations

Currently, Israel's delegation to the UN consists of men in diplomat positions only; in summer 2001; a woman is expected to join this delegation. In addition, Israel has two women independent experts for UN human rights Treaty bodies: The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Prof. Frances Raday) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Deputy Attorney General Yehudit Karp). Furthermore, 18 Israeli women, headed by the then Minister of Environment, Dalia Itzik, participated in the "Beijing+5" women's convention, held in New York in 2000.

Article 9

Nationality

As explained in the previous Report, Israeli citizenship and residency laws do not differentiate between men and women. Both genders have equal rights with regard to acquiring, changing or retaining their nationality or residency. Neither the change of nationality by one member of a couple nor marriage to a non-citizen has any effect on one's citizenship. According to the laws relating to citizenship acquired by birth, both the father's and mother's citizenship carries equal weight.

An interesting development took place since the previous Report with respect to same-sex couples, as explained under Article 16 below. In recent years, the Ministry of Interior had adopted a policy (that is equivalent to its policy towards heterosexual non-marital cohabitants), awarding homosexual foreign partners of Israeli citizens residents status.

Article 10

Education

1. Legal Developments

Two recent legislative measures seek to expand the concept of free education for all in Israel. According to the **Long School Day Law-1997**, which was passed shortly before the submission of the previous Report, the duration of the school day shall be extended to eight hours. Although this Law formally applies throughout the country, due to budgetary restraints, it has only been implemented in peripheral areas thus far. In 1999 the Knesset voted on a ten-year gradual implementation plan of the 1984 amendment to the **Compulsory Education Law – 1949**, providing free nursery school education for ages 3-4. Here too, the implementation of this amendment has been postponed until recently, due to budgetary constraints.

In addition, a mention should be made of the 2000 amendment to the **Women's Equal Rights Law - 1951**, according to which, "*Any woman and man have the equal right to an existence in human dignity, including equality…in education*".

2. Illiteracy Rates and Educational Levels

The total rate of illiterate persons, defined as persons who have had less than four years of education, is on a continuing fall, as exhibited in the following table:

Table 1 - Population with 0-4 Years of Education, 1999

Jews				Arabs and Others			
Sex and Age	Thousands	Years of Schooling (percents)		Sex and Age	Thousands	Years of Schooling (percents)	
		0	1 to 4			0	1 to 4
Women				**Women**			
Total	1871.9	3.4	1.6	Total	370.2	10.7	5.5
15-17	121.2		0	15-17	36.2	1.9	0.6
18-24	283	0.3	0.2	18-24	79.6	2.3	0.6
25-34	338.9	0.6	0.1	25-34	97.6	4.1	1.6
35-44	314	0.7	0.2	35-44	67.8	5.6	6.2
45-54	305.6	1.2	0.5	45-54	40.4	16.6	16.1
55-64	187.9	7.1	3.9	55-64	24.9	38.6	17.7
65+	320.9	13.1	5.8	65+	23.3	57.6	12.6
Men				**Men**			
Total	1744.3	1.5	1.2	Total	371.9	3.2	4.8
15-17	130.2		0.2	15-17	36.3	0.3	1.9
18-24	294.4	0.2	0.1	18-24	82.6	1.1	1.5
25-34	338.7	0.4	0.2	25-34	99.8	1	2
35-44	292.4	0.7	0.3	35-44	71.1	2.3	3.4
45-54	285.7	0.8	0.5	45-54	39.7	4	4.8
55-64	164.5	2.7	1.8	55-64	24.7	6.9	16.2
65+	238.1	6.4	5.9	65+	17.4	26.6	31.2

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

A comparison between the data presented here and the data submitted in the previous Report reveals an overall improvement in the level of illiteracy within all population groups. Thus, while in 1995, 6.4% of all Jewish women and 3.5% of all Jewish men were considered illiterate; the 1999 figures have decreased, respectively, to 5% and 2.7%. At the same time, the rate of illiterate Arab women fell from 20.2% to 16.2%, and the rate of illiterate Arab men fell from 9.1% to 8%.

3. High Schools in Israel

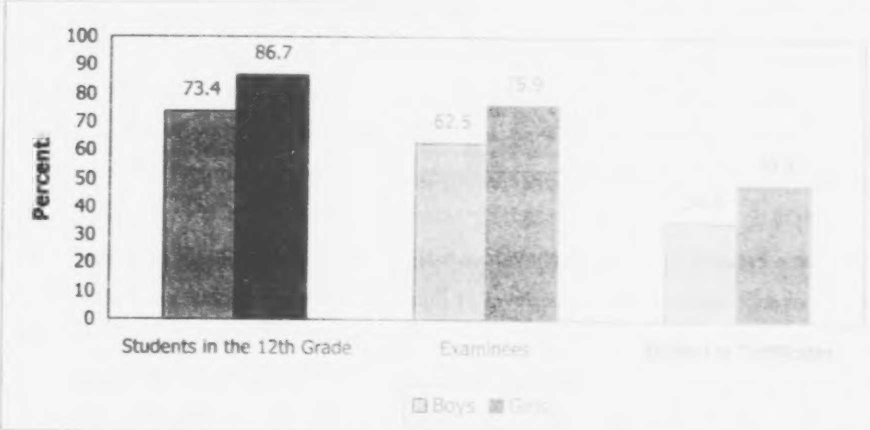
3.1 General and Technological / Vocational Tracking

The Israeli secondary-education system is composed of both technological/vocational and general high schools. Most of the students that take their matriculation exams study in the general schools. In 1996, 71% of the girls in 12th grade studied in the general track, while only 58% of the boys in 12th grade studied in the general track.

3.2. Matriculation Levels

In terms of matriculation examinations and success, girls consistently fare better than boys. More girls than boys take the exams, and their success rate is higher than their counterparts. In 1999, 86.5% of all girls within the 12th grade age group studied in school, compared with only 73.5% of the boys. Girls' entitlement to matriculation degree was also much higher, and stood at 48.5% of all the age group, compared with less than [illegible] of the boys.

Chart 1 - Percent of Students in the 12th Grade, Examinees in Matriculation Exams and Entitled to Certificates, 1999



Source: Ministry of Education, *Matriculation Examinations Data, 1999*

Among the Arab Population, boys' eligibility rates were higher than girls' until the mid-1990s, but since then the situation there has resembled that in the Jewish population: a majority of girls among those taking the exams and among those eligible for certificates.

Other gender differences are evidenced when inspecting the levels of the exams taken by both boys and girls. The 2:1 ratio of boys to girls in the five points math matriculation level, measured in 1985, remained almost the same in 1999, about [illegible] of the boys who took the math matriculation exam, but only 13.5% of the girls, took the advanced five points level. The success rates, however, were generally higher for girls than for boys, as shown in the following table:

Table 2 - Rates of Examinees, Entitled to Certificates and best Achievers, in Mathematics Matriculation Examinations, 1999

Percent of Students:	Girls	Boys
Examinees in Mathematics Matriculation Exams		
Total	80.4	77.5
Thereof:		
3 points	59.7	51.8
4 points	26.8	26.6
5 points	13.5	21.7
Entitled to Certificates		
Total	91.7	89.6
Thereof:		
3 points	88.6	84.9
4 points	96.2	94.2
5 points	96.5	95.5
Best Achievers		
Total	45.8	38.6
Thereof:		
3 points	41.2	31.0
4 points	51.7	41.9
5 points	54.7	52.4

Source: Ministry of Education, *Matriculation Examinations Data, 1999*

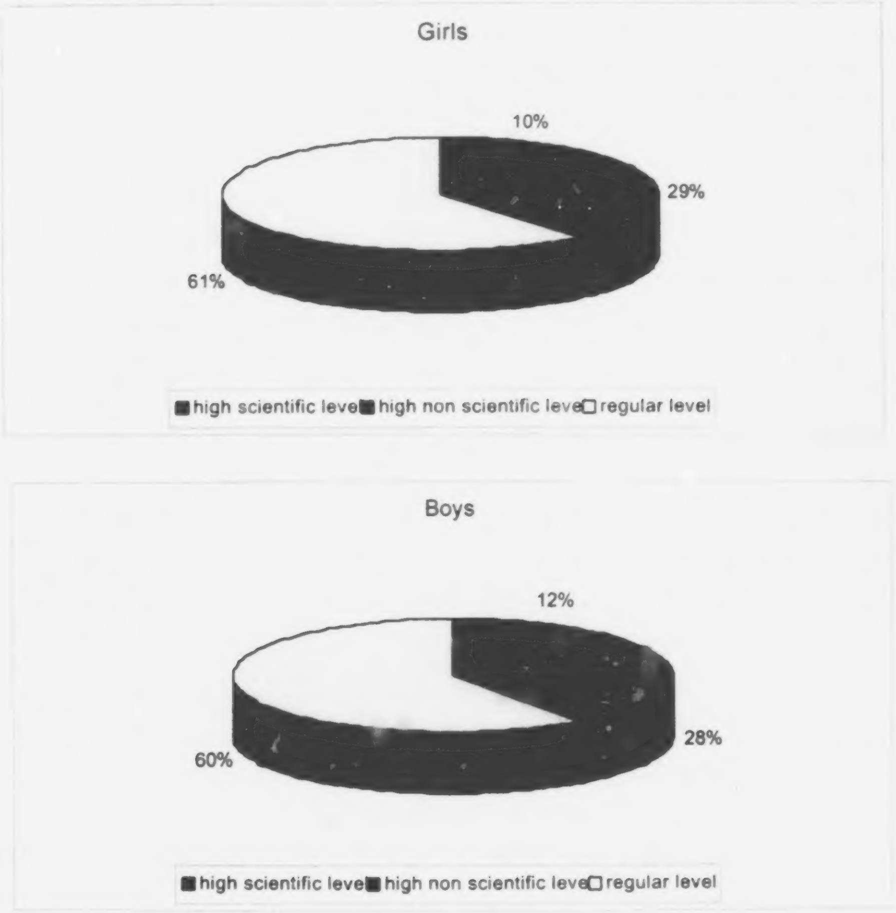
However, while girls do better than boys in the matriculation exams, more boys than girls take enhanced scientific exams, which are critical for acceptance to universities. Thus, while more girls than boys pass the exams, fewer girls meet the minimum requirements for acceptance to university. In 1999, for example, while 88.2% of boys who passed their exams met these requirements, only 85.6% of girls did so. This marks an improvement since 1996, when only 82.1% of girls met the requirements, as opposed to 84.3% of boys.

Table 3 - Matriculation Exams, General Data, 1999

	Girls	Boys
Number of Entitled to Certificates	24,498	18,631
Percent Meeting University Entry Level Requirements	85.60%	88.20%
Average Number of Points in Certificates	27.0	28.1
Average Number of Subjects in Certificates	8.7	8.9

Source: Ministry of Education, *Matriculation Examinations Data, 1999*

Chart 2 - Matriculation Examinees, by Level and Subject, 1999



Source: Ministry of Education, *Matriculation Examinations Data, 1999*

3.3. Education Rates, Attendance Rates and Drop-Out Rates

Parallel to the decrease in illiteracy rates, educational levels in Israel have been steadily increasing throughout all population groups. Within the Jewish population, the median educational level (namely the number of school-years which half the population is below and the other half is above) for men and women have always been close. The small gap that did exist has finally vanished in 1998, when the median education level for both Jewish men and women reached 12.4. Within the non-Jewish population the gender educational gaps had been much larger, but they too are decreasing. Thus, Arab men's level rose from 10.6 in 1995 to 11 in 1998, whereas Arab women's level rose from 9.7 in 1995 to 10.4 in 1998. Moreover, among non-Jewish youth the gender gap is altogether diminishing. In 1998 the median educational level of non-Jewish boys and girls aged 15-17 was the same (10.6), and the level of 18-24 years old women was even higher than that of men (11.9 and 11.8 respectively).

Another important indicator of school performance is the rate of attendance. Among the non-Jewish population, there has been a dramatic increase in the overall attendance rate. The increase in this sector is much greater for girls than for boys, resulting in a growing attendance gap, in favor of girls, within the non-Jewish population. For instance, in 1998/99, the attendance rate of non-Jewish girls stood at 83.5%, while the rate for non-Jewish boys was 75.3%, an attendance gap of 8.2%. The 1994/5 gap was a mere 3.5% (deriving from attendance rates of 69.2% and 65.7% for non-Jewish girls and boys, respectively).
Higher attendance rates for girls is also characteristic of the Jewish education: 98.2% and 92.9% respectively. More detailed data can be found in the following table.

Table 4 - Attendance Rates of 14-17 Year Olds, by Type of School and Religion, 1998/99 and Various Years

Rates per 1000 in respective group of population

	Age 14-17		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Hebrew Education			
1979/80	865	729	795
1989/90	957	855	905
1996/97	978	919	948
1997/98	973	919	945
1998/99 Total	982	929	955
Primary Education	15	17	16
Post-Primary Education			
Intermediate Schools	222	223	223
Secondary Schools- Total	745	689	716
General	516	355	433
Technological/Vocational	229	333	283
Arab Education			
1996/97	808	754	780
1997/98	825	755	789
1998/99 Total	835	753	793
Primary Education	23	25	24
Post-Primary Education			
Intermediate Schools	210	221	216
Secondary Schools- Total	603	506	553
General	458	356	406
Technological/Vocational	144	150	147

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Supplementing this information dropout rates should also be indicated. Nearly 15,000 boys and 7,000 girls in grades 9-11 dropped out of school in 1997/8. The dropout rates in the Jewish system are 8% of boys and 4% of girls. Dropout rates are substantially higher in the

Arab system, and here, too, the dropout rate among boys exceeds that among girls (18% and 10%, respectively).

4. Activities and Educational Programs Adopted by the Ministry of Education in order to Prevent Discrimination

4.1. Gender Stereotypes within School Books

Following similar activities in the Jewish education, described in the previous Report, attempts have been made to remove stereotypical messages from textbooks used within the Arab sector in recent years. Inasmuch as sincere efforts were made to follow this policy, the 1999 State Comptroller Report revealed that the Ministry of Education lacks the means to implement it, and very few of the school books actually undergo review. Consequently, the Minister of Education has decided to "lift the advanced censorship" over the school books, while maintaining the policy of prohibiting the use of books that still contain racist or sexist messages.

4.2. Other Instructions and Intervention Programs of the Ministry of Education which Aim to Prevent Discrimination

The highlight of the Ministry of Education initiatives aiming at preventing discrimination has been the Equality 2000 project, which was implemented in 1996 as an experimental project, initiated by the Israel Women's Network. In its experimental phase, the project was a three year long intervention program intended to be carried out within several different middle schools, involving 10-15 teachers within each school who were specifically trained to deal with issues of gender-equality. Following the experimental phase which included 1 elementary school, 4 middle schools and 1 nursery teachers advanced school, the program is currently being implemented in more schools, and is rapidly becoming a permanent part of the Ministry's curriculum. Its methodology, though, was slightly changed to reach more educators capable of acting as agents of change. It contains elements of both a research project and an active intervention program; it is meant to bring about change in the attitudes and behavior of teachers, advisors, administrators, students and parents regarding gender equality.

Additional activities overseen by the Education Ministry in the last few years with an aim at encouraging gender equality have included the preparation of an anthology in the Arabic language – "Women within the Ranks", the opening of courses on gender equality in teachers' training colleges as well as the organization of study seminars on gender equality for various kinds of educators. The last two years have seen the opening of gender-equality departments in 13 pedagogic centers (9 in the Jewish sector, 4 in the Arab sector), as well as various intervention programs in some 30 schools, in addition to short-term seminars on gender equality in 10 municipalities (6 in the Jewish sector, 3 in the Arab sector, 1 mixed).

In addition to all of these, there are plans to make gender equality the Education Ministry's main overall theme for the 2001-2002 academic year.

The Supervisor estimates that to date some 5,000 school and kindergarten teachers have been exposed to the program. This was achieved through a sharp increase in the budgeting of the program, from 300,000 NIS in 1999 to more than 2,000,000 NIS in 2000 (approximately $500,000). The budget for 2001 is expected to stay the same.

5. Sex Education and Education on Family Life

In addition to its advancement within the Jewish sector in the last few years, as discussed in detail in the previous Report, sex and family life education have been growingly promoted in the Arab sector as well in recent years. Professional advisors have been trained to work with teachers of adolescents, and nationwide conventions and group-training sessions have been held. Arabic language curricula, adapted to Arab society, have been created and taught by advisors, counselors and teachers belonging to the Arab community. It should be noted, however, that sex education has not been promoted in the Druze or Bedouin communities thus far, due to particular sensitivities to such issues.

In 1994 and 1997 the Education Ministry issued guidelines emphasizing the importance of teaching students about classroom violence and child abuse, and as noted in the previous Report, programs on gender violence constitute an integral part of the sex education curriculum. The past few years, however, have witnessed a rise in sexual violence within the school system. Concerns have been expressed about the educational system's ability to deal with this alarming phenomenon, and some of the criticism has been directed towards alleged deficiencies within the sex education curriculum. Thus for example, critics have noted that teachers, who are not required to study sexuality as part of their training, are in many ways unequipped to deal with questions students may have on the issue.

6. The State Religious Education

The Israeli school system is made up of various types of schools, including State, State-religious, and ultra-orthodox independent "recognized" schools. The ultra-orthodox schools which, in 1999 comprised close to 14% of Jewish primary schools and about 10% of Jewish secondary schools have always maintained separation between boys and girls. State religious secondary education has also traditionally been separate, and in the past few years, such separation has been increasing in elementary state religious schools as well. In both streams, sex-segregate education entails various curricula differences, although these do not necessarily imply lesser quality or lower resources for girls' education.

In State religious schools (which comprised in 1999 21% of all primary schools and about 18.5% of the post primary schools), especially within elementary schools, the main difference between the girls and boys is in the religious subjects. Currently, however, a slow change is taking place in State religious schools in this respect, as more and more girls' schools have added, as an independent initiative, the study of *Gemara* (the oral Jewish law), previously exclusively designated for boys, to the curriculum.

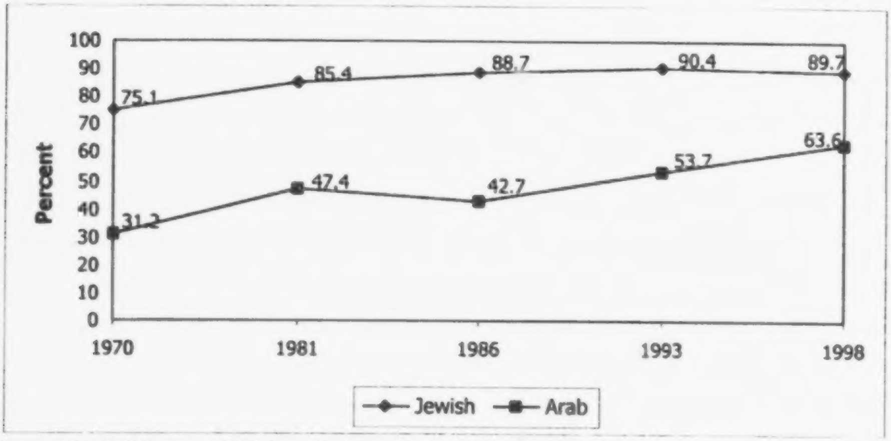
Another positive and gradual change that is taking place within the State Religious Education is in relation to the educational programs dealing, as a whole, with the issues of sex-education, gender-equality, and the advancement of women. All these are dealt with under the topic of Family-Life Education, since officially, there is no explicit topic of sex-education under the State Religious Education. The State Religious Education has recently initiated a program to adapt the main anthology used by the general education system for gender-equality education to the framework of the religious educational system.

7. Teachers

7.1. Teaching as a Feminine Profession

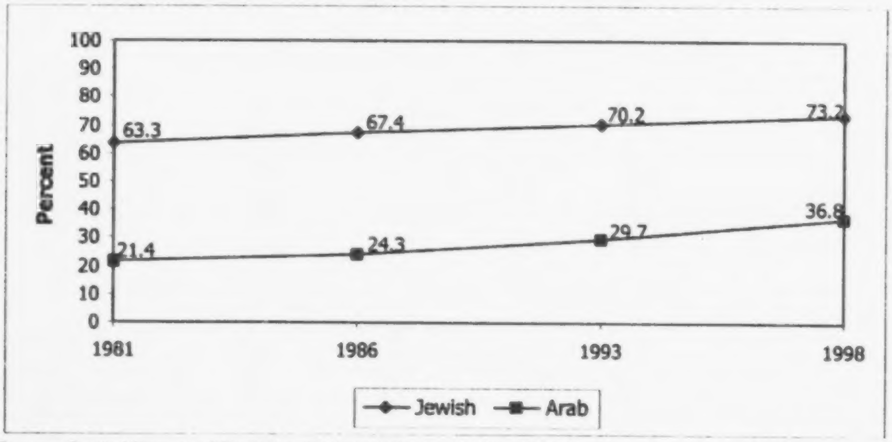
As noted in the previous Report, the teaching profession in Israel is composed primarily of women. Moreover, the percentage of women teachers has been steadily increasing throughout the past number of years, as depicted in the following charts. The charts portray two other interesting findings: First, the gap between the sexes within the teaching profession among Arabs is considerably smaller and second, as the level of the educational institution increases, the female majority of teachers decreases.

Chart 3 - Increase of Women Teachers in Elementary Schools, 1970-1998



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Chart 4 - Increase in Women Teachers in Secondary Schools, 1981-1998



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

7.2. Teachers' Salaries

Notwithstanding the predominance of women in the teaching profession, their position within this profession is inferior to that of men. This is evidenced by their comparative salary levels and by their representation among high ranking administrative positions within the profession. Inequality exists in the salary levels of men and women working within the educational system. Statistics reflect this relative inequality among the teaching staff. Data supplied by the Treasury Ministry in 2000 regarding teachers' salaries who are employed by the Ministry of Education for full-time work reveals that overall, women earn on average 91% of men's salaries. Although this figure portrays a significant improvement from the 87% ratio measured in 1996, it still suggests that future steps should to be taken in order to eliminate any trace of inequality.

The tables below, which detail the rate of teachers in each salary level, further illustrate the differences in salaries of men and women within the education system.

The clear trend in all teachers' groups is the increase in their academic level, expressed in the growing rate of the third, second and first degrees' salary levels. While the trend is slower to reach the Arab educational system, it is nonetheless evidenced there as well, at the first-degree level. However, the gender gaps remain stable, particularly in the Jewish system, where over 60% of the men teachers are at the top two levels, while 80% of the women teachers are at the second and third levels.

Table 5 - Distribution of Teachers In Jewish and Arab Primary Education by Salary Level, 1993, 1998

	1993		1998	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Jewish	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dr. and M.A.	15.2%	4.5%	28.3%	7.1%
B.A.	27.9%	17.4%	32.5%	35.4%
Graduate	35.5%	57.6%	21.0%	44.9%
Certified	14.0%	15.8%	5.5%	6.6%
Not- Certified	7.4%	4.6%	12.7%	6.0%
Arab	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dr. and M.A	2.1%	0.6%	3.1%	0.8%
B.A	15.3%	10.0%	24.6%	21.5%
Graduate	59.1%	50.1%	52.6%	52.7%
Certified	17.1%	32.9%	9.8%	13.8%
Not- Certified	6.4%	7.1%	10.2%	11.2%

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics. *Unpublished Data*

Table 6 - Distribution of Teachers In Jewish and Arab Secondary Education by Salary Level, 1993, 1998

	1993		1998	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Jewish	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dr. and M.A.	24.0%	13.5%	28.7%	16.8%
B.A.	36.7%	51.1%	41.0%	56.4%
Graduate	14.4%	20.9%	12.0%	17.0%
Certified	22.7%	12.2%	15.7%	8.3%
Not- Certified	2.2%	2.3%	1.8%	1.5%
Arab	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dr. and M.A.	7.8%	3.7%	10.8%	4.7%
B.A.	48.6%	49.3%	51.7%	56.2%
Graduate	26.8%	23.4%	23.3%	21.4%
Certified	12.7%	14.3%	11.0%	12.5%
Not- Certified	4.1%	8.9%	3.2%	5.3%

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Unpublished Data*

7.3. Administrative Positions

As with the case of salary levels, an examination of authoritative-administrative positions reveals that the number of men working in educational institutions increases with the level of the position and the institution. In 1997/98, men made up 37.6% of all principals in elementary schools, and 67.3% of all high school principals. Further examination reveals that the extent of inequality is far greater for the Arab sector, as shown in the table below.

Table 7 - Teaching and Administrative Positions in Jewish and Arab Schools, 1997/98

	Primary Education					
	Total	Teachers (all)	Class Tutors	Counsellors	Principals (all)	Vice principals
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	16.4	15.5	11.3	4.7	37.6	26.6
Women	83.6	84.5	88.7	95.3	62.4	73.4
Jewish	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	36.1	11.6	4.2	4.4	25.1	13.2
Women	88.0	88.4	95.8	95.6	74.9	86.8
Arab	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	36.1	33.5	35.2	18.2	85.1	88.1
Women	63.9	66.5	64.8	81.8	14.9	11.9
	Secondary Education					
	Total	Teachers (all)	Class Tutors	Counsellors	Principals (all)	Vice principals
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	31.7	30.9	31.5	10.2	67.3	45.4
Women	68.3	69.1	68.5	89.8	32.7	54.6
Jewish	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	26.8	26.0	20.8	7.3	63.1	40.6
Women	73.2	74.0	79.2	92.7	36.9	59.4
Arab	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100
Men	62.9	62.1	75.7	44.3	90.1	85.1
Women	37.1	37.9	24.3	55.7	9.9	14.9

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Survey of Teaching Staff, 1997/8*

Data from a different survey of the CBS reveals much more notable differences in men's and women's managerial positions in the state religious education system and in the private system.

Table 8 - Principals Positions in Jewish Schools, 1998

	Primary Education			Secondary Education		
	Percent	Men	Women	Percent	Men	Women
Positions						
Principals	100.0	27.2	72.8	100.0	63.3	36.7
Public	100.0	10.9	89.1	100.0	46.7	53.3
Religious Public	100.0	53.5	46.5	100.0	80.0	20.0
Private	100.0	55.1	44.9	100.0	86.0	14.0

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Unpublished Data*

7.4. Teachers Training Colleges

Data concerning teachers training colleges illustrates that the rate of women teachers is unlikely to drop in the near future. Throughout the last decade the rate of men training to be teachers has remained around the 15%-17% interval, a small increase from previous decades' figures. In contrast, the amount of Arab men training to become teachers has dropped dramatically. Although during 1969/70 they made up almost half of those in teacher training programs, Arab men made up less than 8% of the Arab students in teachers training colleges by 1999/00.

Table 9 - Teachers Training Colleges, Various Years

	1969/70	1979/80	1989/90	1994/95	1998/99	1999/00
Hebrew Education						
Total Students	4,994	11,285	12,333	18,380	26,371	28,442
% Men	13.9	10.3	16.6	16.3	15	16.6
Arab Education						
Total Students	370	485	576	1,193	2,110	2,621
% Men	46.9	45.2	22.9	16.2	8.8	7.8

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

8. Physical Education and Sports

Sport funding in Israel comes from the sports authority under the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport, as well as from local municipalities and the lottery. A number of recent court decisions have further regulated the issue of women's sport funding in Israel.

For instance, the regulations of the Union of Basketball in Israel stipulated that the men's national league was allowed to sign foreign players, while the women's league was not.

Furthermore, the men's league was allowed to spend more money than the women's league. While the District Court had invalidated these regulations as being contrary to public policy and to the express provisions of the **Sports Law**, the Supreme Court had accepted the Union's appeal on formal grounds. Nevertheless, the internal tribunal of the Sports Union had later accepted the claim of discrimination, and women's league is now equal to the men's with respect to those regulations.

However, funding was still only half of that of men's teams. Once again, the intervention of the courts had to be sought. This time it was the team of "Elitzur Holon", one of the leading women's basketball teams in the country and in Europe, which had appealed to the High Court of Justice to force the city of Holon to employ equal criteria in funding men's and women's teams. Following a compromise that was reached at the High Court of Justice, a committee, headed by Chief Justice Dov Levin was formed. The committee established rules for equal distribution and allocation of funding for sport teams by local municipalities. The head of the Unit for the Advancement of Women in Sports estimates that some municipalities abide by these rules.

The ***Elitzur*** case had also prompted the establishment of the Israeli Foundation for the Advancement of Women in Sports in 1997, which aims at increasing girls' education on physical fitness, promoting sports among girls, and encouraging and nurturing girls and women with athletic promise through scholarships. The foundation has already engaged in countrywide self-defense classes for girls, and established special programs to advance girls' sports in Arab, Druze and Bedouin villages in the Galilee. Some other encouraging developments took place in 1997: A national women's soccer league was established, including a national women's team and a junior team; an annual women's walk under the title "Women Go Far" was established, drawing many thousands of women from all around the country to celebrate women's physical activities.

As all these developments were taking place, Israeli women athletics have had some very impressive achievements in competitions, better than their male counterparts. In 1999, Ramat Hasharon women's basketball team reached the finals of the prestigious European Roncati tournament before being narrowly defeated; the girls' team of Kiryat-Sharett School in Holon had won the World Schools basketball championship; Israel's women's fencing champion won the bronze medal in the World Youth Fencing Championship; and two Israeli women sailors placed fourth in the finals of the World Sailing Competition.

There has also been a mild rise in the participation of women in the Olympic Games, over the years, as the chart below indicates:

Table 10 - Athletes in the Olympic Games, 1992, 1996, 2000

	Barcelona (1992)		Atlanta (1996)		Sydney (2000)	
	Percent		Percent		Percent	
Total Athletes	30	100%	33	100%	40	100%
Male	26	87%	25	76%	30	75%
Female	4	13%	8	24%	10	25%

This, quite obviously, is not an extreme change. All in all, it indicates a general trend within society, towards recognition of women as an integral part of Israeli sports.

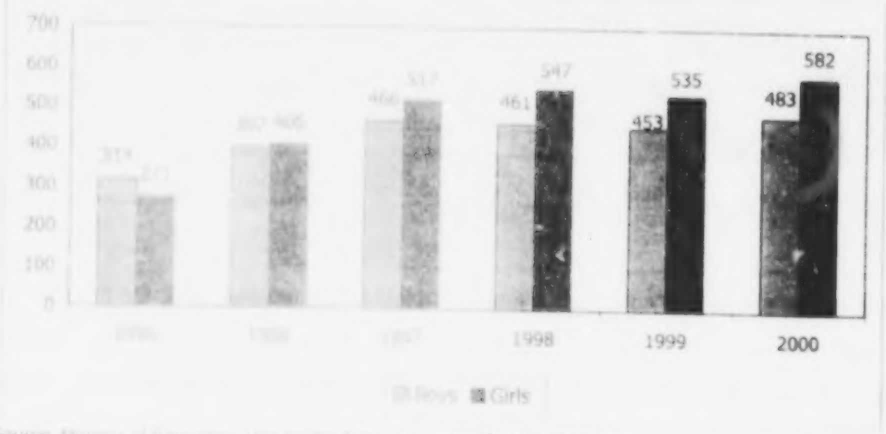
One of the most important tasks is to allow women to play a bigger role, not only in the sporting activities themselves, but also in the various decisions making bodies and managerial roles.

The Sports Association for Schools has set itself the goals of enhancing the number of female students, involved in competitive sport and the training of women for managerial roles within the Association itself and beyond. Another aim is to change the views of female school principals with regards to sporting activities on the school premises and create a more sympathetic and positive environment for such activities.

On the practical level, the Association decided that every sport club, at the school, should include at least one competitive group for girls as well as for boys. This is to be a pre-condition for recognition and support by the Association and is to be implemented by all parts of the population.

It is important to take notice of the fact that the female group was given 50% more than its male counterpart, budget-wise. At a later stage, that affirmative action was abandoned, after it had been decided that the transition period for affirmative action was over and it was time to allow an uninterrupted development.

Chart 5 - Number of Sport Groups in Schools, by Gender, 1995-2000



Source: Ministry of Education, Unit for the Advancement of Women in Sports

As exhibited in the chart above, the number of girls' sport groups exceeds that of boys groups. This is a result of the special emphasis given to girls' sports group by the Sports Association for Schools. This is an indication that when formal support frameworks are put in place, female participants are easily drawn.

The issue of increasing female managerial involvement has also been dealt with in recent years. Nowadays, women hold 1 out of the 10 management positions within the Association.

On the other hand, the Israeli Olympic Committee includes only 2 women out of 31 members of the board (6%) and only 6 women are members of the Olympic Plenum (6%). The overall percentage of women active in the field of competitive sports was 12% in 1994 and has increased to 14% in the year 2000.

9. Higher Education

9.1. Women as Students

The proportion of women among all students has been rising steadily - from 43.3% in the 1987/88 academic year to 56.8% in 1998/99.

Table 11 - Students in Universities, by Year, Various Years

	1969/70	1979/80	1989/90	1997/98	1998/99	Annual Percent Change 1969/70-1979/80	Annual Percent Change 1979/80-1989/90	Annual Percent Change 1989/90-1998/99
All Students								
Absolute Numbers	33,383	54,480	67,770	109,130	111,330	5.0	2.2	5.7
%Women	43.3	46.2	50.8	56.5	56.8	5.7	3.1	7.0
% First Year for First Degr								
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	3.2	0.9	4.9
Thereof: %Women	47.5	50.1	53.7	57	57.4	3.8	1.2	5.7

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

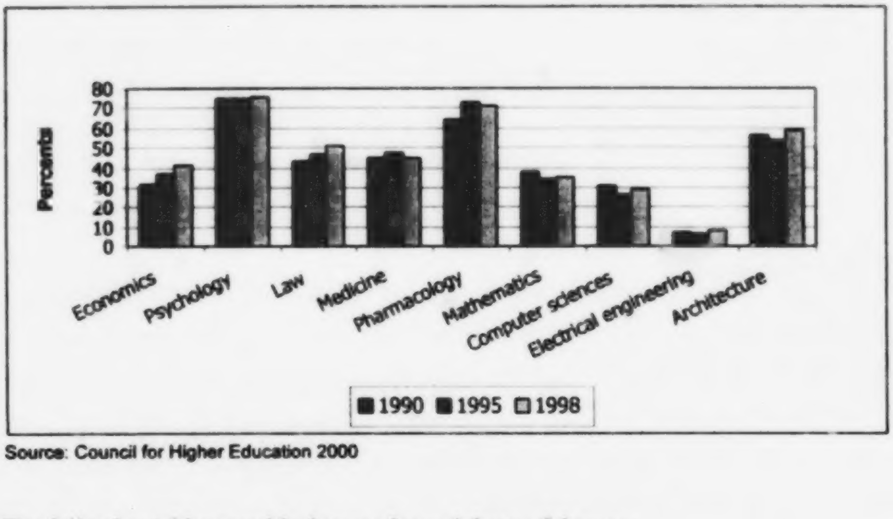
In addition, women today constitute a majority among first, second, and, for the first time, third degree students. However, as the following table and chart depict women continue to concentrate in the humanities and are less likely to enter fields such as Mathematics, Sciences and Engineering.

Table 12 - Students in Universities, by Degree, Various Years

	Total 1984/85	Total 1995/96	Total 1999	Humanities	Social Sciences	Law	Medicine	Sciences and Mathematics	Agriculture	Engineering and Architecture
First Degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% Thereof Women	48.3	56.5	56.6	70.8	63.8	52.3	46.9	43.0	56.0	23.0
Second Degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% Thereof Women	46.8	56.4	57.7	75.8	56.8	49.9	47.3	44.3	50.5	22.2
Third Degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% Thereof Women	39.7	47.8	50.3	60.8	54.8	46.0	69.7	45.0	45.7	26.4

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Chart 6 - Percentage of Female Students in Sought After Fields, Various Years



Source: Council for Higher Education 2000

The following tables provide data on the recipients of degrees:

Table 13 - Recipients of Degrees From Universities, Various Years

	1974/75	1979/80	1984/85	1989/90	1994/95	1997/98	1998/99
	Total						
Grand Total	8 799	9 371	11 218	13 915	18 339	23 807	24 955
thereof Women	3 780	4 223	5 443	7 033	10 031*	13 641*	14 524*
	Bachelor's Degree						
Grand Total	6 638	6 740	8 113	10,192			
thereof Women	2 823	3 035	3 977	5 269			
	Master's Degree						
Grand Total	1,233	1,652	2,140	2 790			
thereof Women	413	625	874	1 236			

* Estimated numbers

Source Council For Higher Education Planning and Budgeting Committee 1995 *The Higher Education System in Israel* Table 5.3 and Central Bureau of Statistics *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Table 14 - Recipients of Degrees from Universities, by Degree and Field of study, 1998/99

	Total Students	% Women
FIRST DEGREE	16 235	57 8
Humanities	4 510	74 0
Social Sciences	5 637	61 5
Law	1 120	43 6
Medicine	1 022	78 9
Sciences and Mathematics	2 000	44 1
Agriculture	161	51 6
Engineering and Architecture	1 785	18 8
SECOND DEGREE	5 957	54 6
Humanities	669	77 6
Social Sciences	1 480	50 2
Law	116	44 8
Medicine	537	[illegible]4 2
Sciences and Mathematics	639	48 5
Agriculture	87	55 2
Engineering and Architecture	439	22 8
THIRD DEGREE	745	41 3
Humanities	125	38 4
Social Sciences	80	47 5
Law	5	N A
Medicine	36	N A
Sciences and Mathematics	358	40 2
Agriculture	38	N A
Engineering and Architecture	103	19 4

Source Central Bureau of Statistics *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Ever since the mid-1980's women's enrollment rates in universities have been significantly higher than the rates of men Moreover, the gap between the sexes in enrollment rates is steadily increasing, as can be seen from the following table

Table 15 - Enrollment in Universities, Various Years

Percents of ages 20-29 in the Jewish population

	1964/65	1969/70	1974/75	1984/85	1989/90	1995/96	1998/99
Total	3.8	6.3	7.2	7.6	8.0	9.8	10.0
Men	5.4	7.0	8.0	7.5	7.3	8.1	8.2
Women	2.8	5.6	6.3	7.6	8.7	11.5	11.7

Source Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Aside from State universities, a number of alternative institutions of higher education, and institutions which grant diplomas other than bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees exist in Israel. The following table shows that while women make up more than half of the total students, it is apparent that their representation in technology, economics and business administration is particularly low. While women comprised 84% of the teachers training colleges' students and 69% of the communication students, they made up only 24% of the students of technology sciences.

Table 16 - First Degree Students in Non-University Institutions for Higher Learning, 1995/96

Year/Subject	Total	Men	Women	% Women
1999/00 Total	53,257	21,967	31,290	
Teacher Training	20,004	3,276	16,728	84%
Technology Sciences	11,343	8,664	2,679	24%
Economics and Business Administration	6,405	3,866	2,539	40%
Arts Design and Architecture	3,209	1,101	2,108	66%
Law	6,571	3,504	3,067	47%
Communication	1,585	489	1,096	69%
Social Sciences	4,140	1,067	3,073	74%

Source Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

9.2. Minorities in Higher Education

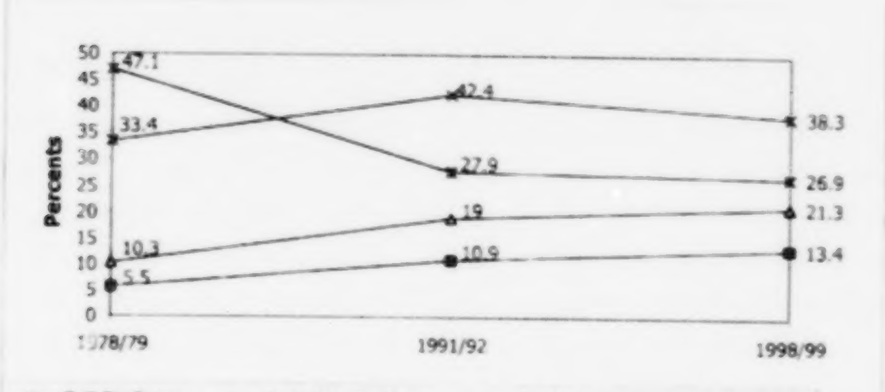
Among non-Jewish communities in Israel, the number of female students decreases as the educational level increases. Within the Moslem population in Israel, still more Moslem men receive higher education than do Moslem women. Nevertheless, a significant increase in non-Jewish women's entry into higher education has been taking place, and their participation among non-Jewish students in general has grown more than four-fold in twenty years, from 8.9% in 1971/72 to 41% in 1992/93.

9.3. Women on the Academic Staff

9.3.1. General Data

In 1998/99, women represented 22.4% of senior academic staff financed by the Council for Higher Education budget, compared to their 20% rate in 1992/93. Although there is clearly an increase in the number of women across the ranks, it seems that as the rank increases, the percentage of women at given rank decreases, as exhibited in the following chart.

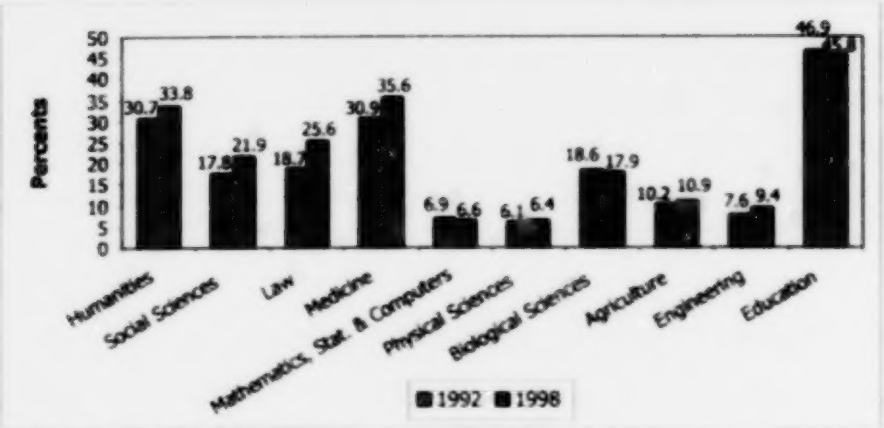
Chart 7 - Percentage of Women among Senior Staff, Various Years



Source: Council for Higher Education, Planning and Budgeting Committee

The following chart shows the rate of women in each academic field. The chart illustrates that while women represent a relatively large proportion of the senior academic staff in fields such as the humanities and medicine, they constitute a relatively small proportion of senior academic staff in the physical sciences, mathematics, computer science, engineering and agriculture. The chart also portrays an impressive increase in the rate of women within fields such as law, the social sciences, humanities and medicine.

Chart 8 - Women as Senior Academic Staff, by Subject, 1992, 1998



Source: Council for Higher Education 2000

The next table shows the stratification of women in the senior academic staff, compared to the general stratification of all senior academic staff. Some gradual progress is noticeable by comparing this data with the data contained in the previous Report. For example, the rate of women among all full professors stood at 8.6% in 1997/98 (compared to 7.3% in 1992/93). At the same time, the rate of women as associate professors increased from 14.2% to 18.7%, and their rate as senior lecturers rose from 30% to 33.1%. Other significant increases are evident in the rate of women among almost all ranks in the field of law, in which, for instance, 25.3% of senior lecturers (compared to merely 7% in 1992/93) were women.

Table 17 - Women on the Senior Academic Staff, by Subject and Rank, 1997/98

Field	Total	Rank			
		Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Associate Professor	Full Professor
Total Senior Academic Staff					
Total	100	15.1	26.8	24.6	33.5
Humanities	100	20.6	34.8	23.5	21
Social Sciences	100	22.9	27.2	24.4	25
Law	100	27.2	16.9	27.3	28.6
Medicine	100	14.2	28.1	23.5	34.2
Mathematics, Stat. & Computers	100	6.7	21.4	24.6	47.2
Physical Sciences	100	2	15.9	27.2	54.9
Biological Sciences	100	8.3	23	28.5	40.1
Agriculture	100	16.7	26	12.9	44.4
Engineering and Architecture	100	11.4	23.1	25	40.6
Other	100	16.9	32.9	20.9	29.2
Percentage of Women on the Senior Academic Staff					
Total	21.9	36.7	33.1	18.7	8.6
Humanities	35.9	45.8	45.6	30.3	16.3
Social Sciences	21.9	34.7	30.5	14.4	7.9
Law	25.6	37.8	25.3	20	19.5
Medicine	35.6	59.8	54.7	28.8	14.5
Mathematics, Stat. & Computers	6.6	19.4	11.4	7.5	2
Physical Sciences	6.4	12.5	10.3	9.7	3.5
Biological Sciences	17.9	12.6	25.6	21.3	12.2
Agriculture	10.9	22.6	23.2	8.4	
Engineering and Architecture	9.4	15.5	12.7	9.1	6
Other	18.8	23.2	28.5	14.1	8.7

Source: Council for Higher Education 2000

Interestingly, Prof. Nina Toren of the Hebrew University, who conducted a thorough study of women on the academic staff in Israel, notes that despite the fact that women are better represented overall in the humanities, they actually fare better in the exact sciences with regard to advancement in the academic ranks. In the humanities, women faculty tend to be far more concentrated at the lower levels, while in the sciences they are more evenly distributed among the academic ranks. Toren attributes this phenomenon to the greater objectivity of evaluation criteria in the sciences. Toren's study further demonstrates that as the age of the department increases so do the chances of finding women professors in that department. This study also shows that the growth of the number of women in a department will increase their power, which influences their chances to reach the level of full professor. As women's power grows within the department, through the number of professors, the number of women in that field of study increases. In addition, larger departments advance more women to the position of professor. It was also found that female professors with more children (3-4), were found to publish more articles, while single female professors were the least professionally productive. These findings stood in stark contrast to the widespread belief that being both a mother and a wife has a negative effect on one's professional productivity.

Women's under-representation in higher education, especially in senior ranks, has begun to draw attention in the past few years. The Knesset Committee on the Status of Women dedicated several sessions to discuss the problem, and has urged the various institutes of higher education to appoint special internal advisors on the status of women. The most recent attempt of the Knesset Committee to generate change in this area is the establishment in early 2000 of a Forum for the Promotion of Women in Science and Academia, headed by Prof. Toren, with the cooperation of the Council on Higher Education.

Another initiative to improve the situation is the establishment of the Israel Association for Feminist Studies in early 1998. Among its aims is the advancement of gender and feminist research and studies in Israel, and the creation of a network of support for those engaging in these fields within Israeli academia. It is also hoped that the Association will serve as a vehicle to advance women within the academic world in general.

9.3.2. Arab-Israeli Women in the Academic Staff

According to a 1999 "Sikkuy" Association report, the rate of Arabs amongst academic staff, which numbers approximately 5000 people, is extremely low, as only 50 (1%) Arabs are members of the Academic staff. In light of this reality, the Maof Program has been set up to encourage the promotion of young outstanding scientists within the Arab-Israeli sector, with the explicit intention of integrating them within academia at the rank of lecturer, including 3 years' financing and a commitment of permanent integration within the standard framework. The founding of this program can be attributed to a study conducted within the academic staff in Israel pointing to a very low proportion of Arab academic lecturers within Israeli academia. During the six cycles of the program which has taken place since 1996, there have been 36 candidates and 26 recipients admitted – 4 amongst them having been women.

10. Science and Technology Education for Women

The last few years have witnessed several initiatives aiming at encouraging girls to enter the fields of science and technology. One such program, entitled "The Future Generation of Hi-Tech", encourages students in general, and female students in particular, to aim for a career in science and technology, through the creation of partnerships (currently 23) between industries and junior high schools throughout the country. Another program, the "GES" project (Girls to Engineering Studies), aims to increase the number of high school girls who study industries and junior high schools throughout the country. Another program, the "GES" project (Girls to Engineering Studies), aims to increase the number of high school girls who study mathematics and physics at the level required to make possible enrollment in university degree-level engineering studies.

In addition, the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport has recently initiated a special scholarship program in which undergraduate students in engineering and exact sciences can receive a yearly stipends of NIS 10,000 (about EUR 2,500), in return for 100 hours of service in the National Council for the Promotion of Women in Science and Technology programs aimed at promoting women in science. Examples of such activities are: (1) Meetings with high school students and other groups where they can serve as role models; (2) Tutoring schoolgirls in mathematics and sciences; (3) Helping in the organization of conferences and other events.

Despite all these efforts, a recent study conducted by Dr. Dina Doron illustrates that there is a need for even more initiatives intended to increase the number of women entering the fields of science and technology. The study revealed that although high school girls are successful in university-run science enrichment activities ("Science Oriented Youth"), girls constitute only 35% of total enrollment overall, and their relative weight in the exact sciences and technological fields is even lower.

11. The Girl-Child

In accordance with the new reporting guidelines following the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, requesting the expansion of particular issues raised in the Beijing Platform for Action beyond the general information in the CEDAW Reports, a separate section on the girl-child was added to this Report, relating to aspects other than education, which has been dealt with in the preceding parts of this chapter.

11.1. The Adolescents and the Different Societal Systems

The following information is mainly based upon a World Health Organization cross-national study, published in 1997 and based on data collected in 1994 (Hereinafter - the HBSC study). The study involved the distribution of questionnaires to more than 7,600 students attending grades 6-11. Due to its transnational scope, the data enables a comparative perspective.

11.1.1. The Family

The family is an important agent for the physical and psychological health advancement of the child. Family relationships are known to influence the adolescent's self-esteem, mental health, social adaptation and physical health.

The HBSC study mentioned above, revealed some interesting findings regarding perceptions of family support among Israeli adolescents. Regarding their ability to talk with their parents, it was found that the situation of the adolescents in Israel is relatively good. As for the readiness of parents to help their children in their studies, Israel was actually ranked first and second in the majority of the age and sex categories. Significantly, family ties are weaker among new immigrant families, as well as families that come from a low social-demographic background. It is also clear that parents in new immigrant families are less involved at school.

Girls fare better than boys by most measures, including those that deal with communication within the family and parents' support at school. The only exception is the rate of children who find it easy to talk to their father about disturbing issues, which is higher for boys than for girls (69.4% of the 15 year-old boys, compared to 53.5% of the girls belonging to the same age group).

11.1.2. The School Environment

With regards to school, the HBSC study revealed that the situation of girls seem to improve between the ages of 11 to 15. The Israeli girls are ranked particularly high in answers to questions measuring feelings of acceptance by their peers (80.4% of Israeli girls at the age of 15 felt they are being accepted as they are by their friends - 3rd in the world - compared to 76.4% of the boys). Israeli girls do not feel that their parents or teachers expect too much of them, contrary to Israeli boys who do experience these feelings. For instance, 23.9% of the 15 year-old boys feel their parents expect too much of them, as opposed to only 14.6% of the girls.

By the age of 15, the rate of girls who feel stressed or very stressed by the studies at school is far greater than that of boys (36.9% compared to 22.1%). It is interesting to note, however, that at the ages of 11 and 13 the rate of girls and boys who feel stressed (or very stressed) is almost the same.

11.1.3. The Peer Group

According to the aforementioned HBSC study, the Israeli adolescent has a positive concept of hobbies. Most of the Israeli adolescents go out some evenings every week. Also, most of them feel they can converse with their friends about disturbing subjects and can receive social support form them. Nevertheless, the rate of Israeli youth that feel lonely is one of the world's highest, and it is higher for girls than for boys. In addition, this phenomenon is more common among new immigrant families, as well as families that come from a low social-demographic background.

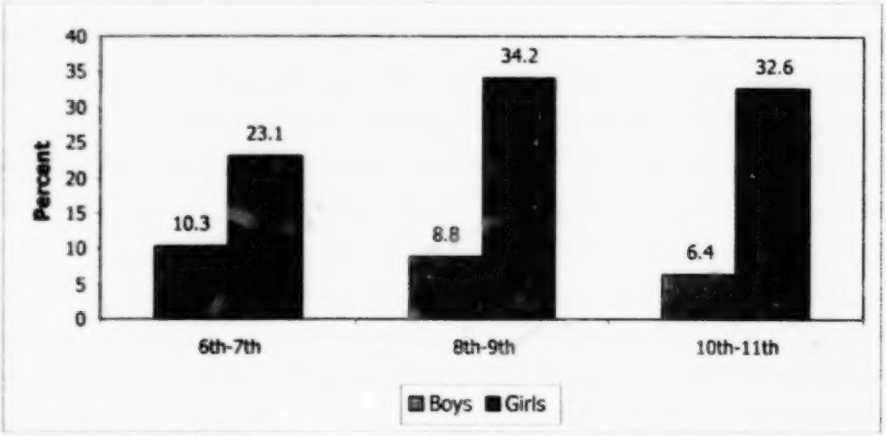
The phenomenon of daring (talking each other into dangerous and prohibited activity) is very frequent with a rate of about 46%, and is much more predominant for boys in all age groups (60.4% of the boys compared to 36.8% of the girls, in the 8-9 grades, for instance).

11.2. Health Risk Behaviors and Leisure Activities

11.2.1. Nutrition, Eating Habits and Physical Activity

A gender gap in the domain of nutrition and eating habits exists within Israeli youth, as 30% of Israeli girls go on a diet to lose weight, compared to 8.6% of the boys. Israel is in fact ranked 1st in the rate of girls who are dieting.

Chart 9 - Percentage of Students on a Weight-loss Diet, 1994



Source: HBSC Survey, 1997

A quarter of Israeli girls report that they do not do sport, compared to 10% of the boys. The combination of these findings indeed reflects themes in Israeli culture, in which not much importance is attached to the advancement of physical education as a contribution to health, whereas a lot of attention is put on young women's body image. It is clear that health advancement programs should be developed to transform this reality, by increasing the girls' physical activities' level, while reducing their excessive interest in dieting and hours devoted for watching television (which are highest for Israeli girls, according to the HBSC cross-national study).

11.2.2. Smoking

The HBSC study refereed to previously revealed that 26.9% of all 6-11 graders have smoked at least once in their life and 8.7% of Israel's youth reported smoking at least once a week. These rates are increasing with age, and in each age group they are higher for boys than for girls. However, the gender gap is decreasing with age.

11.2.3. Alcohol Use

As with smoking, Israeli boys drink alcohol more than girls do, although the gender gap decreases with age. According to the HBSC study, 37.9% of the 6-7 grade boys reported drinking at least one alcoholic beverage in the month prior to the survey, compared to 15.3% of the girls. As for the 10-11 graders, 43% of the boys, compared to 27.6% of the girls, reported drinking at least once in the preceding month. In addition, the number of "drinking days" (number of days in which alcohol was consumed within the last month) is increasing with age for girls while decreasing for boys. In fact, girls in the 10-11 grades reported slightly more drinking days than did boys in the same age group (4.6 days compared to 4.5).

11.2.4. Drug Use

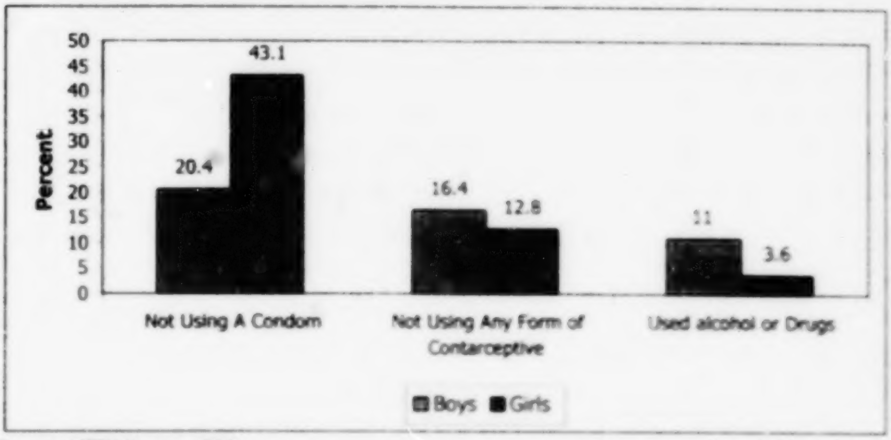
With the exception of dieting pills (that were consumed almost equally by boys and girls), the use of drugs is far greater for boys than for girls. Thus, for example, 7.0% of the boys, compared with 2.7% of the girls, reported using Hash or Marijuana in the preceding year. 8.0% of the boys used sleeping pills, as opposed to 5.9% of the girls. 5.0% of the boys used Opium or Heroin, compared to 0.7% of the girls, and 4.4% of the boys used Crack or Cocaine, compared to 0.9% of the girls.

11.2.5. Sexual Behavior Among High School Students

According to the HBSC study, 2.6% of the girls reported being pregnant at least once in their life, and 10.6% of the boys reported causing pregnancy.

While 20.4% of the boys reported they did not use a condom the last time they had sex, the rate of girls who did not practice safe sex was more than double (43.1%). It is important to note that while the rate of American boys who do not use condoms is much higher (38.4%) compared to their Israeli counterparts, the rate for American girls is only slightly higher (46.5%) than the rate among Israeli girls.

Chart 10 - Percentage of Students who Did not Practice Safe Sex the Last Time They Had Sexual Intercourse, 1994



Source: HBSC Survey, 1997

11.3. Physical and Mental Health

11.3.1. General Feeling and Body Image

The HBSC study sheds light also on data regarding happiness, helplessness, self-confidence and body image.

As for feelings of happiness, the rate of girls who experience a good mood decreases substantially with age. Only 19.6% of the 10-11 grade girls described themselves as "very happy", compared to 40.5 of the 6-7 grade girls. The decrease for boys, although significant, is not as sharp (22% and 38.4%, respectively). In addition, the rate of helplessness and lack of self confidence among girls is increasing with age: While 20% of the 6-7 grade girls felt helpless and 31.4% felt insecure, these figures inflate to 32% and 39.2% for girls in the 10-11 grades. The respective figures for boys are much more stable and range in the 20%-25% interval for all age groups in these two measures. It must be noted, however, that Israel is ranked last for feeling of helplessness among 15 year-old girls and 6th from last for lack of self-confidence among 15 year-old girls.

Physical appearance is of extreme importance to Israeli girls. 36.8% of 6-7 grade girls think they are "too fat", compared to 46.5% of 10-11 grade girls who think so. On the other hand, many of the boys think they are too thin (19.4% of 6-7 graders and 24.5% of 10-11 graders). On the whole, 57.7% of the girls in the 10-11 grades report negative body image, compared to 46.8% of the boys.

11.3.2. Physical and Psychological Symptoms

Israel is ranked 1st in the world regarding students who feel angry or nervous almost every day. Israel also came top with regards to students who suffer from head, stomach or back aches or dizziness more than once a week. Girls suffer more severely from these symptoms, as 49.1% of the 15 year-old girls felt angry on a daily basis, and 26.0% of them experienced one of the aforementioned physical symptoms more than once a week (compared to 32.2% and 23.7% of the boys, respectively). The HBSC survey also reveals that girls experienced more difficulties in falling asleep (25.9% compared to 21.2% of the boys), but that the rate of students who felt tired upon going to school is almost identical (26.2% compared to 26.6%) (Harel, Kanny and Rahav 1997, 134).

11.3.3. Consumption of Medications

A significant gender gap in the consumption of medications was tracked in the HBSC survey, as 59.7% of all girls reported taking a medication in the month that preceded the survey, as opposed to only 40.1% of the boys. It should be noted, however, that both these figures are considered relatively low, compared to other countries. An interaction between gender and age is also apparent: while among girls the use of medications increases with age, among boys an opposite pattern is witnessed.

11.4. Injuries, Violence and Suicide

11.4.1. Injuries

There is no national authority responsible for the advancement of health and security of adolescents in Israel. International comparisons show that the rate of general injuries within Israeli youth is relatively high. However, obtainment of such data is difficult, as many cases of injuries go unreported by the schools. Data gathered in the HBSC survey reveals, that most boys' injuries at school are a result of quarrels and sports activities, while for girls the main reasons for school injuries are falls and faintings.

A huge majority of adolescents report never wearing a helmet when riding a bike (91%), and 40% of all teenagers do not wear a seatbelt. No substantial differences between boys and girls have been traced.

The Ministry of Health has established a database in 27 of 33 general hospitals, of children who were admitted to emergency wards with injuries following domestic violence and neglect, and who were subsequently referred to the social services. In 1998, 1,860 minors were recorded as having visited the emergency room as a result of injury due to violence. Just over half (52%) of these were girls. Among younger children (0-5), slightly larger proportions of children reaching the emergency room (55%) were boys, predominantly as a result of neglect and withholding of care. In the 6-14 age group, 55% of those injured were girls, and among this age group, the category with the largest gender gap was that of sexual abuse, in which twice as many girls were victims as compared to boys. Among adolescents (15-18) girls predominated in all categories of abuse, with the exception of the "neglect" category.

11.4.2. Violence

The Israeli youth is confronted, on a day to day basis, with a high rate of interpersonal violence, both verbal and physical. More than half of all students were subject to bullyism, when boys were more involved in at least one such incident in the year preceding the survey both as victims (48.3% of boys in the 10-11 grades, compared to 28.6% of the girls) and as aggressors (50.3% of boys, compared to 22.7% of girls).

11.4.3. Suicide

According to the HBSC survey, suicidal tendencies are more common for girls (20.6%) than for boys (13.5%). However, the rate of actual suicides is higher for young men than for young women; Between 1991 and 1993, the mortality rate as a result of suicide was 11.7 for 100,000 men aged 15-24 and only 2.5 for 100,000 women of the same age group.

Article 11

Employment

1. Protection from Discrimination within the Workplace

The most important recent additions to the already progressive Israeli legislation aimed at protecting women against discrimination in the workplace are the enactment of the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law** in 1998 (detailed under Article 5) and the 2000 Amendment to the **Equal Rights for Women Law - 1951**. As noted earlier, this amendment expands the use of affirmative action to public institutions and states the right of women to be appointed to every position within the security forces. In addition, the amended section 6 of the Law, entitled "Equality in social rights", declares the right of every woman and man for equality in the area of employment. Also, the **Equal Employment Opportunities Regulations - 1999**, established a public council holding advisory powers with regards to the implementation of the **Equal Employment Opportunities Law - 1988**.

Other recent amendments in employment legislation wish to improve the status of two of the weakest groups of employees in Israel, namely the foreign employees and those employed through temporary manpower contractors. As will be detailed below, the rate of women within these weak groups is relatively high.

- In January 2000, an amendment to the **Foreign Employees (Unlawful Employment) Law - 1991**, seeked to regulate this neglected field and, in particular, to prevent situations of exploitation and oppression which were common in the past. For instance, sections 1A - 1E were added to the Law, stating that every employer must provide his or her foreign workers with a detailed employment contract written in a language they understand. In addition, employers should provide their foreign workers with medical insurance as well as with appropriate lodgings. Any deduction from the worker's salary for the purpose of covering the above expenses must be limited to a proportion determined by the Minister of Labor and Welfare. According to another added section, which is due to take affect in January 2001, the Minister of Labor and Welfare may establish a fund and determine a monthly payment to be paid by employers. Up to a third of this payment may be deducted from the foreign worker's salary. The accumulated sums and any profits added to them will be paid to the worker upon leaving Israel.

Another field in the workforce arena in which major changes are about to take place is that of employment through manpower contractors. A major problem that seemed to dominant this field in the past was that many employers took advantage of this method of employment to hire workers for very long periods of time, without having to pay them various benefits which directly employed workers enjoy. As a result, two categories of workers have emerged within the workplace. A 2000 amendment to the **Law on the Employment of Workers by Manpower Contractors - 1996** tries to deal with this phenomenon by requiring that every worker employed through a manpower contractor for more than 9 months will in effect be considered an employee of the actual employer where the worker was placed. In addition, the employment conditions that exist in the workplace will be applied to those employed through a manpower contractor. This amendment is due to take effect only in June 2001. It constitutes a major reform, affecting about 6% of the salaried workers in Israel, particularly for the public sector, thus a period of adjustment is necessary. The amendment necessitates a reconsideration of the employment forms of thousands of contract labor workers in the public sector.

The role of the courts in interpreting and enforcing the various legislative measures aimed at protecting women from gender-related discrimination in the workplace was exhibited in several recent court decisions.

In the 1997 case of *Plotkin v. Izenberg Brothers Ltd*, the National Labor Court accepted an appeal filed by a woman, who claimed to have been discriminated against, and not hired for a job because of being a woman. Ms. Plotkin answered a job advertisement in a newspaper. She was invited to an interview and her handwriting was sent to a graphologist. During the interview, she was told that women were not suitable for the job, as it entailed being a salesperson outside the office. After Ms. Plotkin did not get the job, she filed suit together with the Israel Women's Network in the Regional Labor Court. The Court found that Ms. Plotkin was discriminate against, but awarded her damages in the amount of one-month salary of a junior employee only. Her appeal to the National Labor Court was accepted, setting a precedent in terms of appropriate compensation in cases of discrimination. The Court stated that the employer's conduct, namely his comment to Ms. Plotkin and his blind acceptance of the graphologist report, was found to be tainted with a stereotypical approach and thus was sufficient, by itself, to render the employer's conduct wrong. The Court ruled that questions of stereotypical nature, be it in an interview or tender invitation forms, are sufficient to make a potential employer responsible. In addition, the Court also held that such a graphological test was problematic and excessively intrusive upon the privacy of a person. As for compensation, the Court held that its purpose in this case is two fold - one, to compensate Ms. Plotkin for her actual damages, and two, to educate the employer in this case, and all other employers, in order to achieve non-discriminatory, non-stereotypical conduct. Aiming at deterrence, the Court held that the compensation must be effective, and ordered the employer to pay Ms. Plotkin 50,000 NIS ($14,200) in punitive damages.

In 1999, the Be'er Sheva District Labor Court, applying the pay equity provisions of the **Equal Pay (Male and Female Employees) Law - 1996**, decided that an employer must release details regarding the salaries of male employees in the work place to the claimant. Preferring to address the principle of equality and the claimant's right to sue her employer and choosing to ignore potential damage to the secret nature of other workers' salaries, the Court accorded the claimant the right of discovery (*Simi Nidam* v. *Rali Electrics and Electronics*).

One last observation concerns the number of complaints regarding gender-based discrimination submitted by employees in the Civil Service. While the overall number of complaints dealt with by the Unit for the Advancement of Women in the Civil Service has remained stable, the rate of sexual harassment complaints has increased from 25% in 1998 to 45% in 1999 and to 53% in the first 8 months of 2000 (57 out of a total of 107 complaints).

2. Women's Health and Employment

A recent survey concerned with the relationship between women's physical and mental health and their work sheds some light on the outcome of the perpetual work-family conflict. The 2000 Brookdale Institute Women's Health Survey (mentioned under Article 5 above) examined women's attitudes towards accommodating family and work obligations. Not surprisingly, only 23% of the women who were satisfied with their accommodations reported a high level of depression, compared with 50% of those who were not satisfied with the accommodations that they were making. Likewise, of those who were satisfied, 86% graded their general health as being good, compared with only 56% who were not satisfied. On the more general issue of working conditions and health, the survey revealed that the less control the woman feels that she has over her work, the more likely she is to report a high level of depression, and the less likely she is to report good health condition. In terms of the type of work, a high rate of women who work in menial jobs report a high level of depression (54%), compared with only 24% of the women who work in "white collar" jobs (Gross & Brammli-Greenberg 2000, 49- 52).

3. Pregnancy and Maternity Leave

As mentioned under Article 4, there is an ongoing move from protective-paternalistic legislation which confines the participation in the workforce of pregnant women and women who gave birth, to legislation which sees the family-unit as a whole and advances greater involvement of fathers in child-rearing.

For example, the 1998 amendment to the **Employment of Women Law -1954** has given the pregnant woman the option to decide whether or not to work over-time, provided she supplies her employer with a medical certificate. The law thus trusts the woman as capable of assessing her exact physical and emotional condition, and economic needs.

The similarly criticized prohibition against employing a woman during her maternity pay-leave, was also amended in 1997, to allow the couple to decide for themselves who would take the second half of the maternity-leave, namely the period of the six-twelve weeks following the birth of a child. Indeed, data from the National Insurance Institute indicates that this time the law has surpasses the public by far. In 1999, two years since its enactment, only 218 of the fathers have taken advantage of this option to take the six weeks leave instead of their wives. When compared to the total requests presented that year, this constitutes a mere one-third percent (0.33%) of the requests. This amendment was originally limited to three years, which ended in May 2001. Following public criticism, the option was newly enacted, with slight variations, in July 2001.

Correspondingly, the right to the 12 weeks of maternity pay-leave in the case of an adoption of a child, given until 1998 only to women, is now being awarded to either of the adoptive parents according to their own choice.

In addition, the **Sick Pay (Absence from Work due to Pregnancy and Childbirth of Spouse) Law - 2000** states that an employee is entitled up to 7 days of leave per year due to treatments or medical examinations related to his spouse's pregnancy, or due to the birth of his newborn, taken from the total amount of his attributed "sick days".

The 1998 amendment to the **Employment of Women Law -1954**, discussed above, has also expanded the protection against dismissal, given to pregnant women, women on maternity leave or on high risk pregnancy leave under the old law, for an additional 45 days upon return to work. Thus making it far less tempting for employers to hire replacements during the employee's absence that simply stay on once the employee can be legally fired. An additional amendment from 2000 prohibits the inclusion of the 45 days period within the necessary period of advanced notice prior to dismissal. The 1998 amendment further prohibits any cutback in a pregnant employee's position without permission from the Minister on Labor and Welfare. However, it must be noted that the number of permissions for dismissals or for cutback of pregnant employees positions, on grounds that such dismissal or cutback is unconnected to the pregnancy, has increased: from approving 50% of the requests in 1997, to 54% in 2000.

Another new protection against dismissal relates to fertility treatments. While the law directed employers to allow workers to be absent from work in order to receive fertility treatments, it did not prohibit the employers from dismissing those workers. A 2001 amendment to the **Employment of Women Law -1954** now prohibits such dismissals.

4. Parenthood

On the legislative level, a 2001 amendment to the **Sick Pay (Absence from Work due to A child's Sickness) Law - 1993** extends the time period that a worker (man or woman) can take as a leave to tend to a sick child from six to eight days a year.

Some development took place in the courts. A 1999 Tel Aviv District Labor Court decision has adopted a broad interpretation to the privilege of a working mother to pass her right for a shorter working day to her spouse. The Court stated that this privilege is reserved for all working mothers, regardless of whether they are hired employees or self-employed. The Court has held that this interpretation, which expands the circle of male workers willing to tend to their children while their spouse is out working, is in accordance with the principles of basic equality as well as with the object of the **Equal Employment Opportunities Law**, and should be seen as encouraging the incorporation of women into high-ranking positions. It must be pointed out that the Na'amat Women's Organization joined in the case alongside the husband-claimant (*Menahem Yahav and Na'amat* v. *The State of Israel*).

Another Labor Court case, which suggests a broad interpretation to a parental right, is the 2000 National Labor Court case of *Jacky Gross* v. *Tal Traveling and Tourism Inc.*. The Court examined section 7 of the **Severance Pay Law -1963**, concerned with the eligibility to severance pay of an employee who quits his or her job during the first 9 months after childbirth, in order to care for a child. According to the traditional interpretation of this section, severance pay will be attributed to a female worker that started working in another, new place of work, as long as the number of hours spent working at this new place of work are significantly inferior to those spent at the first workplace. This interpretation was recently extended in a decision given by the National Labor Court which determined that even in cases where the number of hours spent working at the more recent job was not significantly inferior to that worked at the first place of work, but the new place of work is closer in distance to the worker's home and baby, the female worker will be entitled to severance pay. The Court decided that in such cases, "it isn't the number of hours worked which is relevant, but the fact that the claimant-mother is physically closer - and thus more available – to her baby, should he/she need her."

Another subject which pertains indirectly to the relationship between parenthood and employment is illustrated by cases where an unemployed woman reporting to the state employment agency has refused to accept a job that has been offered to her by that agency, and in so doing has forfeited her right to receive unemployment benefits from the National Insurance Institute. In the *Employment Service* v. *Gila Gaon* case, the Court took in consideration the special circumstances relating to the woman-worker's situation (the fact that the plaintiff was a mother to small children, that she lived at a distance from the place of work, etc.) to ignore the unemployed woman's refusal to accept the job offered her and thus not cancel her entitlement to the NII compensation. It must be mentioned though that the jurisprudence of the Labor Court regarding this matter is by no means harmonious, and that since the handing down of the aforementioned decision, numerous contradicting decisions have been handed down in regional courts.

5. Affirmative Action

See discussion under Article 4, above.

6. Social Security Benefits

See discussion under Article 13, below, as well as Israel's Periodic Report to ICESCR.

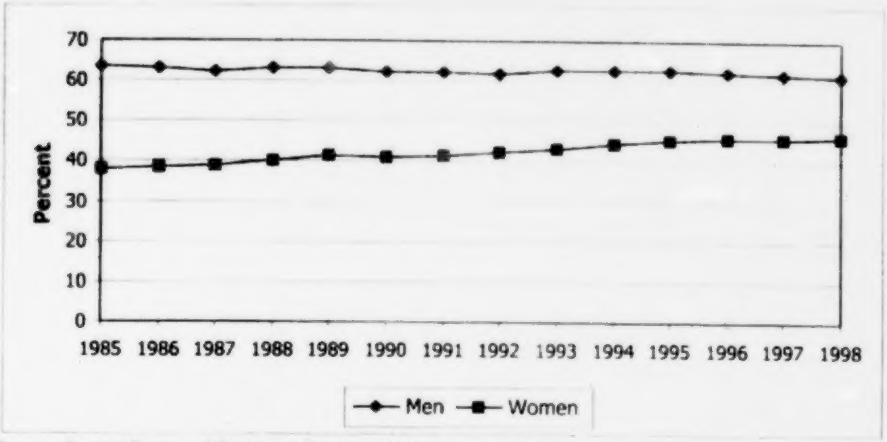
7. Employment of Women - Data and Analysis

7.1. Women in the Labor Market

7.1.1. Women's Participation in the Workforce

In recent years, women's participation in the workforce (measured as the percentage of women aged 15 and over who belong to the civil workforce, from among all women aged 15 and over) has continued to rise slowly, whereas the men's participation has decreased.

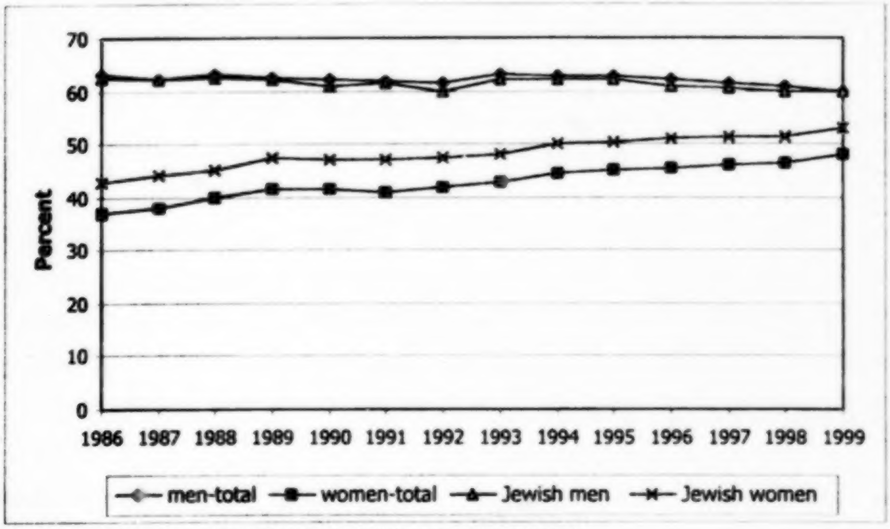
Chart 1 - Population Aged 15 and over in Workforce, 1985-1998



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1999*

Women's participation in the workforce steadily increased to 46.3% in 1998 (after reaching 45.7% in 1995), compared with men's participation, which went down to 61.2% in 1998 after peaking at 62.9% in 1995. Women composed 44.2% of the total workforce in 1998 (compared to 43.2% in 1995 and 33% in 1975). Jewish women's level of participation is higher than overall women's participation, reaching 51% in 1998. It is also interesting to note that the level of participation among Jewish women is the highest in the age group of 35-44 (67.9% in 1998). Increase in women's participation is taking place among Arab women as well, though the level of participation within the latter was low to begin with (22.3% in 1998, compared to 18.3% in 1995 and 16.8% in 1994).

Chart 2 - Percent in Workforce of Total Population Aged 15 and over, by Religion and Sex, 1986-1999

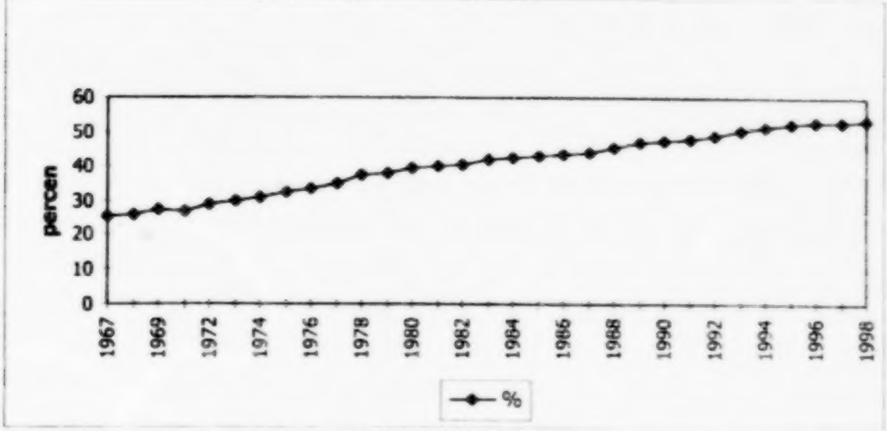


Source: **Central Bureau of Statistics**, ***Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000***.

The correlation between women's participation in the labor-force and their educational level, discussed in the previous report, gets further support from recent data. In 1998, among Jewish women with 16 years of schooling and over, 78.1% belonged to the work force, as compared to 75.8% of Jewish men with a similar level of education. Among those Jewish women with 0-4 years of schooling, only 5.6% participate in the work force. The differences in the participation rates of women according to their years of schooling are much larger than the differences in participation rates of men by years of schooling. For example, the increase in two years of high-school for women (from 9-10 years of schooling to 11-12 years, which may also indicate the difference between having a matriculation report and not having one), carries a 20% increase in their rate of participation (from 32.2% to 51.9%), compared with only 7% increase among men in the parallel groups. Thus, the correlation between educational level of women and their rate of participation in the work force is clearly much stronger than the parallel connection among men.

By 1998, married women's participation in the labor-market has reached 53.4%. In 1998, 41% of non-married women were in the work force, compared with 51% of the married women and 63.7% of the divorcees. This is explained by the fact that the group of non-married includes younger women who are still in their course of studies. The data that concerns the higher participation of divorced women undoubtedly expresses the more pressing economic need of that group of women.

Chart 3 - Married Women in the Civilian Labor Force, 1967-1998



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1999*

As noted in the previous Report, women's participation in the work force decreases as their number of children increases, and rises with the maturation in age of their youngest child. In 1998, 76% of Jewish women with one child were in the work force, compared with 49% of those with four children or more (in 1994 the respective rates were 74% and 43%). 58% of Jewish women whose youngest child was less than one year old were in the work-force, compared with 80% of those whose youngest child was between 10-14 years old (the 1994 figures were 54% and 71%, respectively).

7.2. Work Patterns

Women continue to dominate the group of part-time workers (defined as employees who work between 1-34 hours a week), though to a lesser extent than before. Thus, in 1998, 65% of those who regularly worked part-time were women (compared to 72% in 1994). Indeed, an examination of labor-force data throughout the 90's reveals a steady increase in the rate of women working full-time, from 40.6% of all women in the work force in 1990, to 46.6% in 1998.

Of all working women, 36.4% regularly worked part-time, while only 15.5% of all working men regularly worked part-time. The most common reason given for women's part-time work is child-care and housework (22%). For 20.3% of women part-time workers and for 20% of the men, the work was considered full-time (as is in the case of schoolteachers). Of the men part-time workers, 24.3% were self-employed, while only 10.3% of the women were similarly self-employed.

Table 1 - Employed Part-Time, 1999

	Total	Men	Women
Grand Total (Thousands- Absolute No's)	566.4	186.3	380.1
Usually Worked Full-Time (Thousands)	125.3	65.1	60.2
Percent	22.3	35.3	15.9
Usually Worked Part-Time (Thousands)	436.9	119.4	317.5
Percent	77.7	64.7	84.1
Reasons for Part-Time Work (Percents)			
Total	100	100	100
The Work is Considered Full Time	21.6	19.2	22.3
Sought Additional or Full-Time Work and Did Not Find	19.5	17.9	20.1
Illness and Disability	5.1	9.8	3.5
Retirement	6.3	12.5	4.3
Housewives	15.7		20.6
Studies	18.9	33.6	14.3
Not Interested in Full-Time Work	11.0	4.3	14.7
Other Reason	2.1	2.8	1.8
Self Employed, Employers, Kibbutz Members, and Unpaid Family Members	14.8	23.9	14.8

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

The Central Bureau of Statistics data also depicts the rate of those who were temporarily absent from work during the week in which the survey was taken. These data enable an interesting comparison between the rate of maternity leave (still used by women mostly) and army reserve service leave (used almost exclusively by men) as causes for absence among the total temporary absents. While in 1995, military reserve service caused 7.8% of the absents, slightly more than the 7.2% which were caused by maternity leave, in 1998 reserve service absents went down to 4.3%, while maternity leave absents increased to 9.3%. A partial explanation is the cuts that have been made in the past few years regarding the army reserve duty, leading to fewer call-ups and for shorter periods of time. From the other direction, fertility rates have slightly increased in the late 90's, as observed under Article 12, and women's general work-force participation has also gone up.

Another difference between women and men is in the worker's status. In 1998, while 87.3% of all the working women were employees, only 77.5% of the working men were salaried workers (i.e. employees). The difference is clearer when the data concerning employers and self-employed is examined: while 18.5% of the men participating in the labor-force in 1998 were employers, self-employed and cooperative members, only 5.5% of the women participating in the labor-force were in similar status. This difference has far-reaching consequences in terms of earnings. According to the National Insurance Institute, there are significant earning differences by work status: while in 1996, 4.5% of all self-employed earned up to 4 times the average earning rate, only 1.6% of all employees reached that earning rate.

The global phenomena of the overrepresentation of women in the informal sector (which includes unsupervised and unreported hired house-work and childcare help, as well as unsupervised and unreported workers) and the contingent labor force (consists of workers who lack explicit or implicit contracts for long-term employment, or who work minimum hours that vary unsystematically), seem not to have escaped Israel. Naturally, since the informal sector is unaccounted for by definition, its scope cannot be gathered by formal workforce statistics. To date, no governmental research was done in Israel to discern the extent of the informal workforce.

As for the latter phenomenon, estimates given by NGO's who research in this area suggest that over 7% of the Israeli workforce consists of temporary manpower companies, almost 30% of the public sector workers are employed through such companies, and over 80% of them are women. These workers are usually much more vulnerable to workforce instabilities and cutbacks, and lack many of the standard workers social conditions and benefits. This reality called for a legislative intervention in the shape of the 2000 amendment to the **Law on the Employment of Workers by Manpower Contractors - 1996 discussed** above.

Another class of even more vulnerable workers which has recently been emerging in the Israeli labor market, is the class of foreign workers. Hopefully, here too the recent 2000 amendment to the **Foreign Employees (Unlawful Employment) Law - 1991**, will help improve the existing situation.

One other development taking place in Israel's economy, that has special implications for women, is the "high-tech revolution". Recent research revealed that during the first two years after graduation, 15% of the men and 13% of the women reach senior positions, but four years into their careers, 54% of the men and only 33% of the women are being promoted to senior positions. It is believed that the structural impediments that are built into the high-tech industry, which include very long work hours and very little flexibility in work patterns, added to the lower rate of women graduates of computers, technology, sciences and management, lead to disproportionally lower numbers of women in the industry, especially in managerial positions.

A recent report by the National Council for the Promotion of Women in Science and Technology compared the results of a 1999 survey on the status of women in the hi-tech industry, covering nearly 220 companies, to those of a previous survey carried out in 1996. Among the findings:

1) The number of female managers in hi-tech industry is growing rapidly. In 1999, women constitute about 20% of managers in this field, up from 14% three years before. However, most female managers in hi-tech industry are in human resources or finance departments, i.e. non-technical ones.

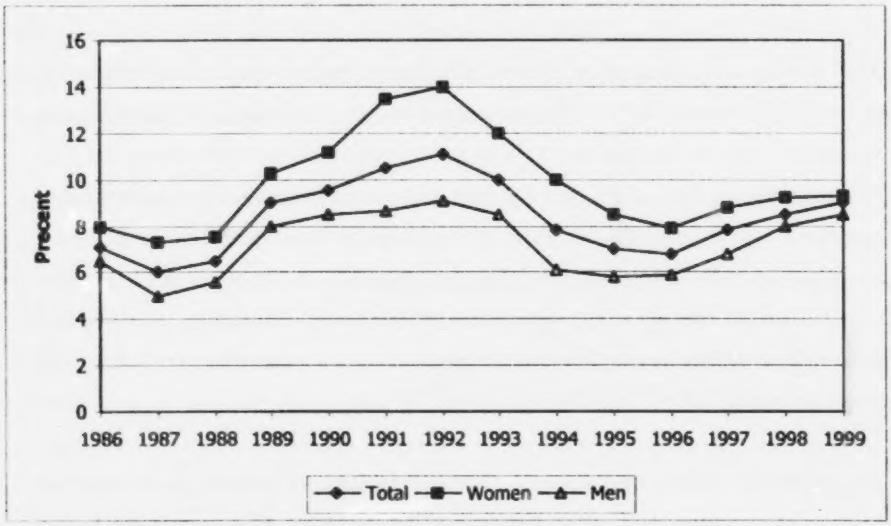
2) Currently, 68% of electronics and software companies employ at least one women manager, in comparison to 48% three years ago. The number of firms employing at least one female manager is higher in electronics (76%) than in software (60%).

3) The average monthly salary of female managers has increased by 11% since 1996. However, the average salary of a male manager is generally higher.

7.3. Unemployment

The rate of unemployed persons (defined as persons who did not work for pay for one hour during the week of the survey, and who were actively seeking work) has increased in the second half of the 1990's, due to a recession in the Israeli market. Interestingly, while the rate of unemployed men has increased by almost 50% (from 5.8% in 1995 to 8.5% in 1999), the rate of women rose by a mere 10% during this time (from 8.5% in 1995 to 9.3% in 1999). As a result, the historical gap between unemployment rates among women and men dramatically decreased, as portrayed in the following chart:

Chart 4 - Percent Unemployed Persons of Civilian Workforce, by Sex



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000.*

The diminishing gap between women and men is depicted by other data as well. For instance, while the rate of women within the entire workforce slightly increased in the last years (as was discussed above), their rate among the unemployed decreased quite substantially, from 54.4% in 1995 to 47.3% in 1998. Furthermore, according to the Employment Service, women comprised 50.5% of the total population seeking employment in the last few years, compared to 55% in the first half of the 1990's.

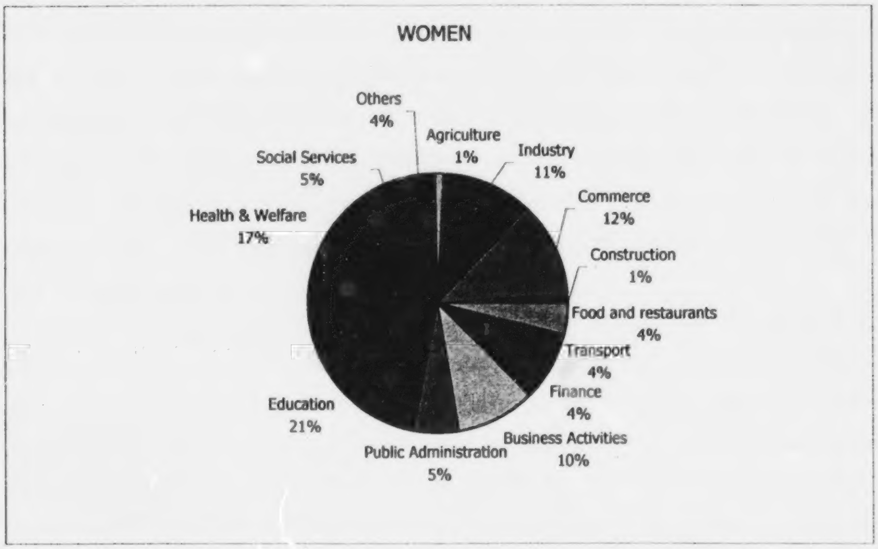
7.4. The Careers of Women: Levels and Salaries

7.4.1. Women's Occupational Distribution and Gender Segregation

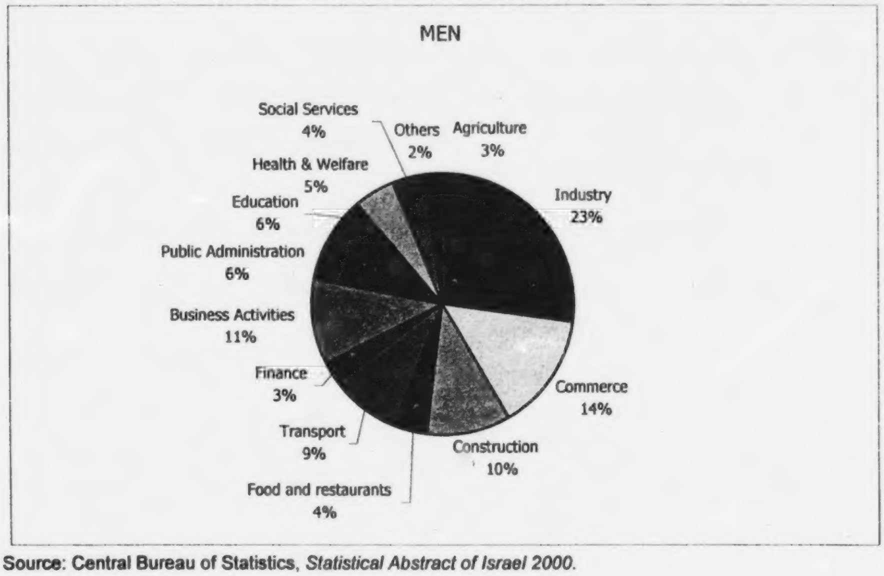
Women's Occupational Distribution did not change much since the submission of the previous report and patterns of work segregation still seem to exist. Thus, when adding together the percentages of women in education, health, welfare and social-work services, with other branches of services (both public and private), the aggregate comes close to 60% of all working women who work in services activities. The picture is totally different among employed men, who dominate most other activities, such as agriculture, manufacturing, electricity and water, construction, trade and repairs, transport and communications, business activities and public administration.

Chart 5 - Employed Persons, by Economic Branch, 1999

A. Women



B. Men

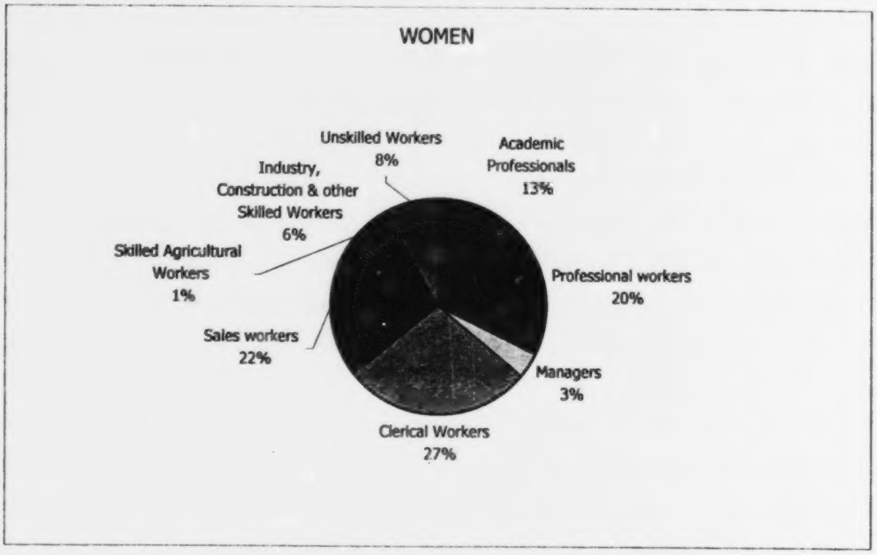


Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000.*

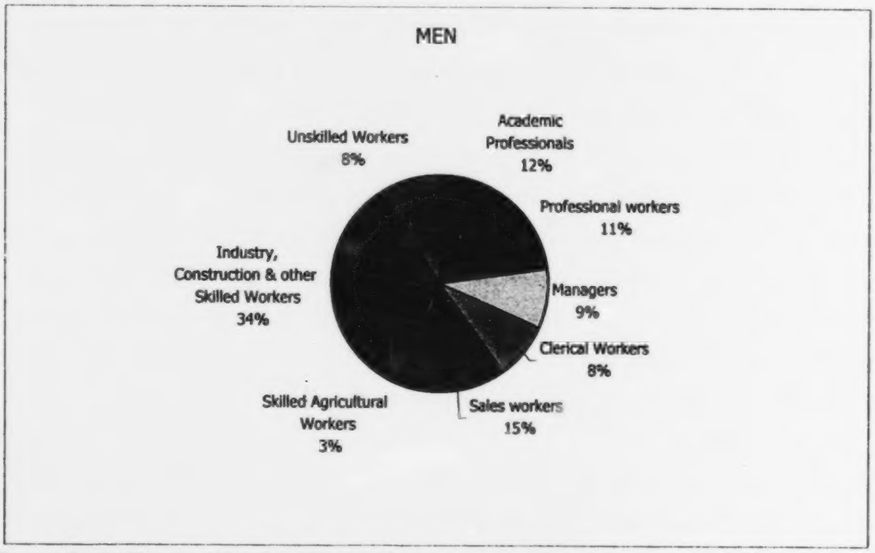
Work-segregation is further evident upon examination of the data regarding women's and men's occupations. Women predominate occupations such as clerical workers (where they constitute 73% of employees) and sales and services workers (54% of these are women). More encouraging figures concern the rates of female academic professionals (13%) and associate professionals and technicians (19.7%), as they are higher than those of the employed men in these occupational categories (12.2% and 10.5% respectively). It is, however, important to note that most women in these occupational categories are teachers, nurses, social workers and the like, mostly in the public services.

Chart 6 - Employed Persons, by Last Occupation, 1999

A. Women



B. Men



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*.

7.4.2. The Glass Ceiling Phenomenon

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics data from 1998, 7.9% of all working men were managers, whereas only 2.9% of all working women were managers. Of the total managers, 26,100 out of 116,600 were women, a total of 22.4%, an increase in comparison to the 1995 data, when the rate of women in management positions was 19.5% of all managers (12,000 out of 66,000). Of all women managers, 8% are CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) or director-generals, 65% are senior managers, and 27% are other managers, whereas of all men managers a total of one third are CEOs/director-generals, which is four times the number of women managers in this category. Forty-five percent of the men managers are senior managers, and 21% are other managers.

Another source of information on women in managerial positions is the Forum of Women Managers in Industry. The Forum has conducted a research among industrial companies in 1997, revealing that 45% of them do not employ women in managerial positions at all, 34% employ only one, 16% employ between two to four, and only 5% employ more than four women in managerial roles.

A 1998 research, conducted by the Forum, reveals that the proportion of female executives in industry has increased from 16% in 1994 to 20% in 1997. However, according to the research, the growth in the rate of female executives has not been matched by equalization of their terms of employment with those of their male counterparts. Women's wages are relatively low, and only one third of the women executives receive special benefits (a car, car maintenance, etc.) compared with more than half of male executives. According to the research, 46% of female executives have a BA degree, while 12% hold a MA or Ph.D. 66% of the female executives with academic degrees have a degree in social or management sciences, 24% in natural sciences or exact sciences and 7% in humanities. The research does not indicate any substantial difference in the evaluation of the performance of male and female executives. However, women executives were found to have a certain advantage in human relations and level of motivation. Men, on the other hand, were considered to have a certain advantage in professionalism, assumption of responsibility and decision-making. According to the interviewees, the main reason for the low rate of women in management positions is women's lack of time, due to the need to take care of the family.

Gender stratification in the civil service can also be viewed as a case study of the glass-ceiling phenomenon in the labor-market. It should be noted though, that less than 4% of all working women directly belong to the civil service. As already mentioned (under Article 7 above), while women made up 62% of all workers in the civil service in 1999, less then 12% of the top three ranks in the four main classifications of the service (which serve as the main resource for managerial positions) were women. An additional fact that is more related to salary gaps that are discussed below, is that in 1999, women made up only 19% of civil servants employed through senior contracts. Although this marks a 7% increase from their 12% in 1997, it is still only a third of their overall rate in the service.

7.4.3. Salary and Earning Gaps

Salary gaps between men and women continue to characterize the Israeli labor market, though to a somewhat lesser extent. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics' data of the year 1998, in all branches of the labor market, a female employee's average monthly income was about 61% of their male counterparts (compared to 58% in 1992-3). This is partly explained by the differences in the average weekly work hours, which were 46.4 for men and 35.9 for women (compared to 46.3 hours and 34.1 hours, respectively, in 1992-3). However, close inspection of the data reveals a large gap in the average income per hour as well, which was 1.21 times higher for men, a slight decrease from the 1.25 index in 1992-3.

This gap remains constant when other variables are taken into consideration. For example, men with 5-8 years of schooling earned 36.5% more per hour than women with a similar educational level. Among those with 16 years of schooling and over, men's average income per hour was 23.5% more than women's. The gap in income per hour increases with age, from only 5% among 15-24 years olds up to 31% among the 45-54 year olds. Even within those occupations which are dominated by women, such as clerical work, a man's hourly income remains 30% more than that of a women's. The following tables present the full data discussed here.

Table 2 - Gross income, by Age, 1997

		Age					
	Total	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Men							
Average Gross Income (NIS) -per month	6,304.9	2,693.5	5,395.7	7,232.1	8,596.0	7,964.6	5,215.8
-per working hour	32.8	17.3	27.3	35.1	42.1	42.8	39
Average Working Hours per Week	46.4	41.5	47.5	48.4	48.1	43.8	32.2
Women							
Average Gross Income (NIS) -per month	3,974.7	2,133.1	3,725.7	4,501.9	4,994.8	4,543.5	2,590.6
-per working hour	27.1	16.5	24.7	29.9	32.1	33.6	24.2
Average Working Hours per Week	35.9	34.5	37	36.1	37.2	32.2	25.2

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Income of Employees - Individuals, 1997.*

Table 3 - Gross income, by years of Schooling, 1997

		Years of Schooling					
	Total	0 to 4	5 to 8	9 to 10	11 to 12	13 to 15	16+
Men							
Average Gross Income (NIS) -per month	6,304.9	2,915.9	4,075.8	4,365.3	5,414.0	6,752.6	9,918.5
-per working hour	32.8	17.6	21.7	23.2	27.9	36.2	49.5
Average Working Hours per Week	46.4	41	44.7	46	47.6	44.8	47.5
Women							
Average Gross Income (NIS) -per month	3,974.7	1,911.7	2,270.2	2,518.8	3,272.5	3,906.5	6,004.4
-per working hour	27.1	14.3	15.9	17.4	22.1	27.1	40.1
Average Working Hours per Week	35.9	32	33.6	35.6	36.9	35.4	35.8

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Income of Employees - Individuals, 1997.*

Table 4 - Gross income, by Occupation, 1997

		Occupation							
	Total*	Scientific and Academic	Professional and Related	Administrators and Managers	Clerical and Related	Sales	Agricultural	Industry Mining Building and Transport	
								Skilled	Other
Men									
Average Gross Income (NIS)									
-per month	6 304.9	10 440.6	7 285.3	12 041.3	6 422.0	4 795.7	2 842.2	4 794.9	3 188.8
-per working hour	32.8	52.9	40.4	55.3	34.8	26.2	16.8	24.1	18.9
Average Working Hours per Week	45.4	46.7	43.4	51.4	44.3	45	42	47.8	43.2
Women									
Average Gross Income (NIS)									
-per month	3 974.7	6 484.9	4 374.6	9 039.0	4 173.0	2 424.8	2 189.4	2 675.0	1 964.3
-per working hour	27.1	44.1	33.3	52	26.6	18.1	15.4	15	14.6
Average Working Hours per Week	35.9	35	32.1	41.6	38	34	36.4	43	33.7

* Including Employees whose branch is not known.

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Income of Employees - Individuals, 1997*

According to the National Insurance Institute, women's general average monthly income in 1996 was only 56% of that of men's. Furthermore, of all married male employees in 1996, 37.3% earned less than half the average monthly salary, while 58.7% of all female married employees earned less than that. Of all married male employees, 3.4% earned four times the average monthly salary, while only 0.4% of all married female employees earned that amount. Examination of the adult population income survey reveals that in 1996 women made up 57% of all employees earning less than the minimum wage. Of all women who worked full-time in 1997, 13.6% earn less than the minimum wage, compared with only 5% of all men who worked full-time. While NII data reveals that the general earning gap has somewhat decreased, so that in 1997 women's average monthly salary reached 61.2% of men's, a thorough analysis of earnings' stratification according to place of residence indicates that the gender earning gaps are far from diminishing: one of the main findings of this analysis is that the earning gap increases as the men's salary rises. The highest gap was observed in the localities where men's earnings were the highest, so that in the locality with the highest average men's income, women's income was only 43% of the men's. The analysis further shows that every 10% increase in men's income leads only to 8.2% in women's.

The Civil Service 1998 Report concerning salary gaps between men and women within the civil service (relating to salary data of 1996) showed consistent gaps in all classifications, reaching a 25% gap at the administrative classification, with the exception of the professional attorneys classification where women's earnings surpassed that of men's by 8%.

Current data supplied by the Ministry of Finance indicates that the overall salary gaps between men and women within the government ministries stands at 28.2%. Once again, the professional attorneys classification is an exception (along with physiotherapists), while significant salary gaps exist in the Foreign Service, in Ministries Chambers, among Doctors and Journalists (government) classifications, in which men's earnings exceed those of women by 38.9% for the first two classifications and 28.2% for the latter two. The following table exhibits salary gaps in selected professions:

Table 5 - Women's salary compared to Men's, Civil Service, 2000

Classification	Women's Salary as a ratio of Men's Salary
Registrars	0.98
Senior Contracts	1.00
Foreign Service	0.72
Engineers	0.79
Economists	0.92
Legal Advisers	1.02
Psychologists	0.85
Physiotherapists	1.23
Lawyers	0.82
Advocates	1.07
Public Defence Attorneys	0.94
Journalists (government)	0.78
Journalists (IBA)	0.87
Journalists (Production)	0.82
Doctors	0.78
Nurses	0.89
Social Workers	0.84
Research Workers	0.84
Occupational Therapists	0.77
Senior Contracts - New	1.00
Director Generals - New	1.00
Ministers Chambers	0.72
Total	0.78

Source: Ministry of Finance

8. Time Use

As mentioned above, there is still a substantial difference in the average amount of time men work compared to women. It is believed that this variance in time spent on work affect men's and women's careers in terms of promotions, jobs that carry greater economic rewards, and so on, and thus they bear at least an indirect effect on men's and women's salaries.

An original time budget survey that was conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics in 1991-92 and examined the time use in Israel reveals some very interesting findings that are relevant to this subject. According to the survey, men devote most of their working-time to paid work, more than twice (2.5) as much as women. Women devote most of their working-time to unpaid work, almost three times (2.75) as much as men. Women devote 11% of their time to care of home, in contrast to 2% of men. Women devote 4.3% of their time to care of children, in contrast to 1.4% of men.

Among the age group of 30-44, most of the time is spent on work (36% in general). However, men spend most of it on paid work (28%), while women spend most of it on unpaid work (25%). Overall, of the total time men and women of all age groups spend on work, 74.4% of men's working time is spent on paid work, while 71% of women's working time is spent on unpaid work.

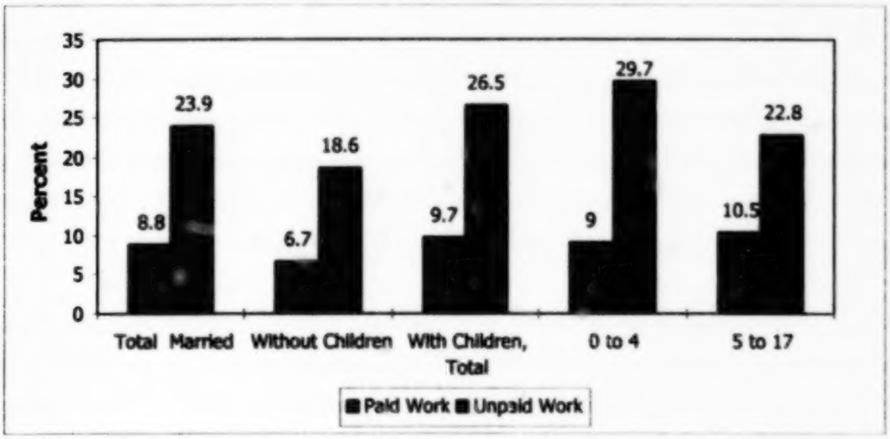
Perhaps the significant observation that comes out of this survey is that even among those employed in full-time jobs, women spend more than twice as much time on unpaid work than men (14.8% compared to 6.1% respectively), making the total time spent on all work equal for men and women who are employed in full-time jobs (38%). Interestingly, of those who are employed in part-time jobs, women spend much more time than men on work in general (33.5% and 25.1% respectively), since men who work part-time hardly increase their share of unpaid work in the home.

There is a high correlation between the number of children aged 0-17 in a household and the amount of time that married women spend on unpaid work: as expected, this amount increases in direct proportion to the number of children. Whereas without children a married woman devotes 19% of her time to unpaid work, this amount grows to 31% when she has 3 children or more. Men's work, on the other hand, is not correlated to children at all: the amount of unpaid work of married men is small compared to married women (8%), and it remains small, with no relation to the number of children in the household. Married women with 3 or more children in the household spend a daily average of 7 hours and 20 minutes on unpaid work, compared to 2 hours per day spent on this by married men with 3 or more children.

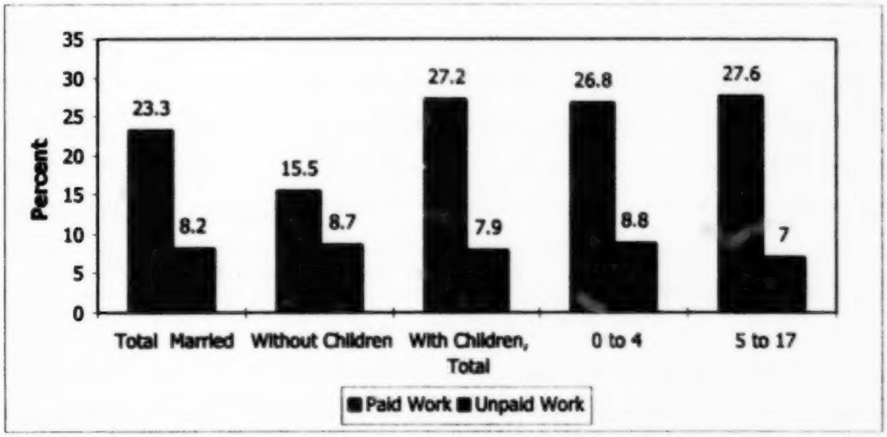
The following two charts demonstrate the differences between the average rate of time that men and women spend on paid and unpaid work, according to their family status and the ages of their youngest children:

Chart 7 - Time Spent, by Family Status and Age of the Youngest Child, 1991-92

A. Women



B. Men



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Time Use in Israel - Additional findings from the time budget survey 1991/92*.

9. Vocational and Professional Training for Women

In 1999, women comprised 44% of all trainees in vocational courses provided by the Division for Training and Development in the Ministry of Labor and Welfare. Within retraining courses for people who hold an academic degree, women comprised 53% of all trainees. Recently, the Division for Training and Development (joined by the Women NGO's Council) initiated a unique project, aiming at increasing women's participation in its courses.

Regarding the Arab sector, 1997 saw a fall in the number of courses offered to Arab women as well as in the choice of fields open to them. Indeed, the number of trainees in the Tel Aviv, Beer Sheva and Jerusalem districts fell from 250 in 1996 to 120 in 1997, and the number of courses offered fell from ten in 1996 to only four in 1997. Nevertheless, since the total budget of the Department for Adult Training has increased by 10% between 1996-2000, it is hoped that more resources will be allocated to women in general, and to Arab women in particular.

The following table depicts the distribution of men and women trainees within the various types of courses offered. Women are clearly concentrated in book-keeping, clerical work and nursing, whereas most men are trained in engineering, electronics, driving and building.

Table 6 - Participation of Women and Men in Vocational Training, by Subjects, 1998

	1998			
	Thereof: Training			
	Women	Men	Total	Total
Total	39,587	43,826	83,413	100,399
Type of Course				
Vocational Training	39,587	43,826	83,413	83,413
Supplementary Training				16,986
Vocation				
Building	248	4,409	4,657	4,690
Woodwork	109	640	749	749
Metal Work	265	2,937	3,202	3,202
Mechanics	51	2,800	2,851	3,144
Electricity and Electronics	672	7,340	8,012	8,327
Practical Engineering	4,999	12,295	17,294	17,294
Programming	2,336	2,984	5,320	5,320
Bookkeeping	12,374	3,409	15,783	15,783
Clerical Work	5,345	1,096	6,441	6,441
Hotel Keeping	1,662	1,690	3,352	15,675
Nursemaids	3,306	138	3,444	3,444
Paramedical Occupations	797	114	911	911
Hairdressing, Beauticians	2,006	690	2,696	2,696
Dressmaking	804	145	949	962
Driving	151	5,700	5,851	9,775
Drafting	579	286	865	931
Printing and Photography	797	464	1,261	1,261
Miscellaneous	8,085	8,984	17,069	17,088

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics. *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

10. Child-care

The social services departments in the Ministry of Labor and Welfare refer children to day-care centers due to dysfunctional family situations. Throughout the second half of the 1990's an average of 14,000 "welfare children" stayed within the governmentally subsidized day-care centers. Since 1994, the governmental support of the program has increased by 120%, compensating for the decrease in Women's organization contributions to the program.

11. Enforcement of Employment Legislation

11.1. The Department of Supervision of Labor Laws of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare

The Department of Supervision of Labor Laws of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare supervises the enforcement of a number of labor laws, including the **Employment of Women Law - 1954**. In recent years, the number of applications to the Department, regarding complaints from women who have been discharged from their employment during pregnancy, and employers' applications for termination permits, has risen steadily, and now reaches around 850 cases per year. As was noted above, the number of permissions for dismissals or for diminishing pregnant employees positions has increased: from approving 50% of the requests in 1997, to 54% in 2000.

Thus, in the first 9 months of 2000, 339 permissions for dismissals were given (77 of the permissions were justified by the financial difficulties facing the workplace at the time of dismissal, and another 43 permissions followed the employee's consent). In 82 of the 213 cases in which permissions were denied, the employee returned to work before the decision was known.

Table 7 - Applications and Permissions for dismissals of pregnant employees, 1997-2000

Year	Number Of Applications	Number of Permissions
1997	760	385
1998	844	468
1999	828	419
2000 (First 9 months)	627	339

Source: Ministry of Labor and Welfare

As to the procedural aspects of handling these cases, it should be noted that internal instructions delineating the parameters for approving dismissals do not exist. This is attributed to an ideology not to restrict the department supervisor's discretion.

In the course of 2000 the supervisor was instructed to provide the dismissed worker with the right to examine the employer's request for her dismissal.

11.2. The Department of Labor Law Enforcement

This department is responsible, among other things, for the enforcement of **The Minimum Wage Law - 1987**, which was amended in 1997, increasing the rate of the minimum wage from 45% to 47.5% of the average wage.

According to Israel's Report on the Convention on Economic and Social Rights, in 1997, more than 2,500 work places employing 45,000 workers were inspected by the department in compliance with the **Minimum Wage Law**. Violations were found with regard to approximately 2,650 workers, who received compensation totaling NIS 3.3million. The comparison with data from 1996 point to a fall in the number of violations, as well as to a clear improvement in the amounts paid in compensation for these violations. Previous research conducted by the Research Department of the Bank of Israel found the obedience to the law to be only partial (30%), with four times more women than men earning below the minimum wage. Critical research points to presently on-going violations and low levels of obedience.

In the last few years, the Enforcement Division of the Ministry raised its activities under the **Equal Employment Opportunities Law - 1988**: it conducted 290 investigations during the year 1999 and 597 during 2000 (until August). The legal department pressed charges during year 2000, until August, in 6 cases, and had at that time 51 more indictments in preparation. Many cases involve unlawful advertisement. A few cases involve alleged substantial discrimination. It must be noted, however, that no data concerning the number of cases involving discrimination against women is available.

12. Women's Employment among the Arab Population in Israel

Among the Israeli Arab working population, in 1999, as in 1995, the large majority is men, 51 percent of whom were employed as skilled industrial workers. Labor force participation of Arab women remains low, though rising slowly. In 1999, the proportion of employed Israeli Arab women among all Israeli Arab workers increased from 21% in 1995 to 24% in 1999. Among the main reasons for this specific situation are the traditional attitude taken, within the Arab community, towards the role of the woman, and the reluctance and lack of support from husbands and families to women that do leave their homes to work. Furthermore. 90% of the small workplaces are located far from the Arab settlements and there remains a lack of services for working women, such as transportation, daycare services, and kindergartens. Only 44% of three year-old Arab children attend kindergartens in comparison with 95% of Jewish children of the same age.

Of the women who were employed in 1999, 28% work in academic and professional fields, 36% were clerical and sales workers and 34% were employed in industry as skilled and unskilled labor. The conditions of those Arab women who work for wages outside their homes are far from being satisfactory. A 1998 survey on the conditions of women working in the private sector in Nazareth, the largest employer for Arab women, revealed that 61% of the women were paid less than the minimal wage; 72% had no legal contract; and only 35% received overtime payment. Furthermore, when asked what and how much the minimum wage was, only 30% of the women could answer correctly(Farrif, 1998). Research on the connection between place of inhabitancy and salary levels, based on Central Bureau of Statistics data from 1997, revealed that among the 72% of the municipalities and townships in which women earned less than the general average wage earned by women (which was 75% of the average wage earned by men as explained above), all 71 Arab municipalities and townships were included (Adva center, 1999).

With regard to employment opportunities for Arab women in Israel, the Authority for the Status of Women and the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women focused in 1999 and 2000 on encouraging Arab women to join the police force and to train as social workers in the Arab sector which lacks social workers. Furthermore, as part of the Multi-Year Plan for Development of Arab-Sector Communities adopted by the government in a resolution taken in October 2000 which adresses all aspects of social development of Arab-Sector Communities, the governmented committed to allocate a total amount of 268 million NIS (Approximately $65 million) for setting up engineering-technician and vocational training courses, NIS67 million for each of the years 2001-2004. This includes an amount of 24 million NIS for opening supplementary education classes for women, 6 million NIS for each of the years 2001-2004.

Article 12

Equality in Access to Health Care

1. Introduction

Since the publication of the previous Report, some significant steps have been taken to improve women's health care in Israel. After the 1995 UN/NGO Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, women's health was placed on Israel's national agenda, with forthcoming results. Among the results obtained were the appointment of a counselor to the Minister of Health on women's issues as well as the establishment – under the Minister of Health's authority - of a National Council on Women's Health which has been active since February 2000. Since then the Council has met in May, July and October of 2000 (the Council convenes four times a year).

The functions of the Council are: Advancement of the area of women's health; Clarification of areas of medicine requiring special attention within the female population; Recommendations for policy making in the areas relevant to women's health; Raising public awareness on the topic; Organization of activities on the topic of women's health. The Council has five committees on the following topics: Heart disease, health education, mental health, research and education for medical and paramedical teams. In addition, the National Center for Disease Control appointed a special researcher to collect data on women's health. Even more fundamental was the establishment of women's health care centers in every major hospital in Israel.

However, while these advances are positive in and of themselves, a number of women's particular health needs and concerns currently remain unanswered and consistent gaps between the relative situation of men and women in terms of health indicators – to the detriment of women – are still found in many realms.

In terms of research and information availability, two important developments have taken place recently: the Israel Women's Network (IWN) together with the Hadassa Institute published a resource book on Women's Health in Israel, gathering all available information and data on the subject; and the JDC-Brookdale Institute conducted a national survey, collecting for the first time data on women's health and welfare state and on women's experiences with the Israeli health care system (see also under Article 5 above). The survey included telephone interviews with a sample of 850 adult women and the scope ranged from physician-patient relationships, health education, availability to health services, physical and mental health state, violence against women, and care for ill and disabled relatives. The survey was conducted in cooperation with the US Commonwealth Fund, and this joint enterprise provides for comparative perspective, enabling a broader understanding of the findings. Both of these research initiatives support previous assessments of women's lower health status, and stress the importance of continuous research and dissemination of information among health professionals, policy makers, and recipients themselves.

2. Equality in Health Care

Under the law, most health care services available for men and women residing in Israel are included in the basic basket of services. However, up until recently, a range of medications for treating the gender-related illnesses of breast cancer and osteoporosis were beyond the basket's realm. Breast cancer is the most prevalent cause of death among young women in Israel, and osteoporosis affects women over 65 four times more than it affects men over 65 (24% and 6% respectively).

Recent protests and reports in the mass media by women's organizations have helped spark a public outcry over the lack of treatment. In a move perhaps influenced by this uproar, the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research, a research institute supported by the Ministry of Health, convened a Consensus Conference in December 1999 to publicly discuss the inclusion of specific medications for osteoporosis (Alendronate and Raloxifan). Following the conference, recommendations were made to the public committee in charge of determining the medication and treatment available in the basic basket of services, and in January 2000, it was decided to include the aforementioned medications, as well as the expensive Herceptin drug, - a novel anti-cancer therapy approved by the FDA (USA Food &Drug Association) in 1998 – within the basic basket of services.

3. Special Health Services for Women

3.1. Pre/Post-Natal Services: Delivery Rooms and Maternity Wards

The Health Ministry has recently begun to focus on the improvement of hospitalization conditions in maternity wards. The need for a revamping of hospital facilities and a rethinking of hospitalization conditions appear all the more urgent presently due to a sharp rise in overall births: 15% from 1993 to 1998. Beyond the important rise in the number of births, the Health Ministry has reported a dramatic 46% increase during that 5 year period in the number of infants with birth weights of 1,500 grams and less. This sharp rise in births, with its high percentage of infants requiring intensive care, has stretched Israel's maternity wards, delivery rooms, and pediatric intensive care units well beyond capacity.

Yet despite the heavy criticism, a study of 1,760 women giving birth in hospitals found 70% of the women reporting high levels of satisfaction with the overall treatment they were given. Significant to the changing norms of health providers in Israel, who still hold unto the paternalistic doctor-patient relationships, satisfaction was highest among women who reported a high degree of control in decision-making and intervention, and receiving precise information from the medical staff. Also, in choosing a hospital to give birth, women gave high priority to the presence of an intensive care unit and advanced neonatal care – elements which seem to have been found in a majority of cases.

3.2. Geriatric Services

In 1998, the average life span for Israeli women was 80.3 years, and for men 76.1 years. In Israel as in most other industrialized nations, women live longer lives than men, yet Israeli women maintain a smaller life span advantage than do their counterparts in other countries. Moreover, researchers note that the quality of life of elderly women is in general worse than that of elderly men. They point to differences in health factors such as chronic disease (including high blood pressure, presented by 53% of women and 42% of men; and osteoporosis, presented by 24% of women and only 6% of men), in addition to subjective perceptions of health status: 44% of men over 65 but only 30% of women over 65 described their health as being “good” or “very good”.

Seventy percent of elderly women and 56% of the men estimated their health as being "not good" or "not very good". Elderly women in general are less independent in daily activities: 42% of the women and only 27% of the men need help in at least one of the domestic daily activities. Gender difference are also reflected in mental health among the elderly: more women than men report depression (15% and 9%, respectively). This finding is in line with gender difference in parameters of mental health in the younger age groups. Experts note that more efforts should be put into enhancing functional independence during aging, in order to increase the quality of life.

Meanwhile, elderly women are still the main recipients of both institutionalized and "community" cares. As was already mentioned in the previous Report, in 1996, women – who comprised 57% of all Israelis over 65 years - made up 70% of all hospitalized patients in geriatric hospitals. Furthermore, in 1998, women comprised close to 73% of all 81,000 recipients of long-term care benefits, with an increasing proportion being treated through the community rather than through geriatric institutions. Usually, this "communal care" is in fact the care given by just one person, either a relative (most often a woman relative) or a professional caregiver.

Table 1 - Population over 65, 1995

	Women		Men	
	%		%	
Total	100	310,893	100	236,408
Married	40.2	124,996	78.6	185,794
Divorce	4	12,358	3	7,129
Widowed	53.1	165,063	15.7	37,086
Never Married	2.7	8,476	2.7	6,399

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *1995 Census*, 1999.

4. Family Planning among Israeli Women

4.1. Legal Abortions

As mentioned in the previous Report, the only approval required for an abortion is that of the Committee for Approval of Termination of Pregnancies. In 2000, 42 such committees were operating and reviewing the cases of women requesting an abortion. Beyond these 42 committees, as a result of a 1994 Ministry of Health directive which stated that statutory committees were not permitted to examine applications for abortions of pregnancies that have developed beyond the 23rd week, special regional committee were set up to review these less routine cases. In the year 2000, six such special committees existed. Between 1995 and 1998, they reviewed the application of 594 women and approved 498 of them (84%) – overwhelmingly based on clause 3 of the penal law's dispositions on abortions (namely the possibility of mental or physical disability of the future child).

4.2. Abortion rates

Since 1980, the number of legal abortions performed in Israel has fluctuated between an estimated 14,000 to 19,000 a year. The number of abortions performed in 1999 remained within this bracket: 18,785, accounting for 12.2% of all known pregnancies that year.

Table 2 - Applications, Approvals and Actual Terminations, 1988-1999

Year	Applications	Approvals	Terminations
1988	17,963	15,903	15,255
1989	18,866	16,780	15,216
1990	19,121	17,020	15,509
1991	18,772	16,934	15,767
1992	19,099	17,377	16,389
1993	18,568	16,855	16,149
1994	17,958	16,650	15,836
1995	18,586	17,211	16,244
1996	20,408	19,225	17,987
1997	20,472	19,348	18,480
1998	19,844	18,873	18,149
1999	20,581	19,674	18,785

Source Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

The second half of the 1990s seems to have witnessed a slight change in the proportions of abortion approvals per applications, as well as the actual number of abortions performed. While in the early 1990s, 91% of the applications were approved and 94% of those approved were actually performed, by 1999 the rate of approval reached 95.6%, and the rate of performance was 95.5%. Central Bureau of Statistics in-depth research into the demographic and social characteristics of applicants to the committees suggest not to conclude that the committees' policy has changed, but rather to attribute this to the prior selection conducted by the social worker before the application actually reaches the committee. The ratio of the various clauses for approval has remained unchanged: out-of-wedlock pregnancy remains the major reason for approving termination of pregnancy, constantly comprising over 40% of the approvals since the late 1980s, reaching over 50% in 1998.

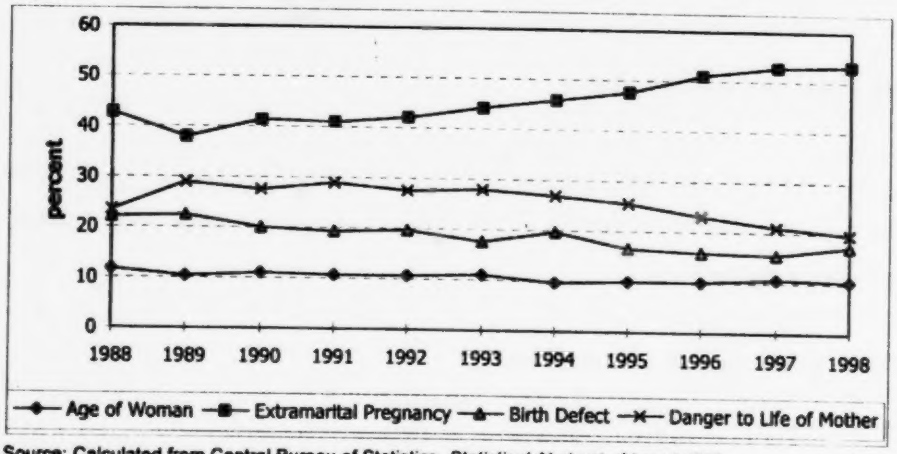
Table 3 - Terminations of Pregnancy in Hospitals, by Cause, Various Years

Year	1990	1993	1996	1999
Applications	19,121	18,568	20,468	20,581
Approvals	17,020	16,855	19,225	19,674
Actual Terminations	15,509	16,149	17,987	18,785
Article:				
Woman's Age	1,717	1,778	1,794	1,828
Out of Wedlock Pregnancy	6,417	7,063	9,185	10,143
Malformed Fetus	3,116	2,837	2,858	3,039
Danger to Woman's Life	4,259	4,471	4,150	3,775
Rates per 100 Live Births	15.0	14.4	14.8	
Percentage of Known Pregnancies*	13.1	12.6	12.9	

* Live Births and Terminations of Pregnancies

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Chart 1 - Terminations by Section of the Law (percents), 1988-1998



Source: Calculated from Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1999*.

Table 4 - Applications to Commissions for Termination of Pregnancy, 1994, 1998

Marital Status and Religion	Total	To Age 19	Total	To Age 19
	1994		1998	
Absolute Numbers				
Total	16,903	2,318	18,500	2,524
Married Women	8,760	105	8,436	82
Unmarried Women	6,053	2,193	7,508	2,418
Religion:				
Jewish	14,593	2,136	15,123	2,255
Moslem	744	51	936	42
Christian	428	13	838	49
Rates per 1,000 Women				
Total	14.0	9.7	12.4	12.4
Married Women	13.0	9.0		
Unmarried Women	13.2	9.8		
Religion:				
Jewish	15.8	12.1	13.2	11.9
Moslem	4.4	1.2	4.6	1.0
Christian	11.1	2.1	25.5	9.8

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

5. Fertility Rates, Treatments, and Services

5.1. Birth Rates and Fertility Rates

The absolute number of live births per year has increased from 80,843 in 1970 to 130,080 in 1998. The following two tables present further data regarding the number of live births, by religion and by the mother's age.

Table 5 - Live Births, by Religion, 1992-1998

Year	Total	Jews	Moslems	Others
1992	110,062	78,205	26,419	31,853
1993	112,330	78,893	27,692	33,430
1994	114,543	80,102	28,400	34,440
1995	116,886	80,401	30,226	36,485
1996	121,333	83,710	30,802	37,623
1997	124,478	86,140	31,374	38,338
1998	130,080	88,744	33,857	41,336

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1999*

Table 6 - Live Births, by Mother's Age, 1998

Mother's Age	Total	Jews	Moslems	Other Religion
Total- Absolute Numbers	130,080	88,744	33,857	41,33
Total - Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Up to 19	3.5	1.7	8.0	6.9
20-24	23.6	19.5	33.2	32.5
25-29	33.2	34.6	29.3	30.2
30-34	23.9	26.3	18.4	18.8
35-39	12.2	13.9	8.3	8.4
40-44	2.9	3.0	2.0	1.9
45+	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Table 7 - Fertility Rates, by Religion, Various Years

Year	Jews	Moslems	Christians	Druze & Others
1980-84	2.8	5.54	2.41	5.4
1995	2.53	4.69	2.44	3.5
1998	2.67	4.76	2.62	3.1

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1999.*

Within the Jewish population, the largest drop in fertility occurred among women born in Europe and America (from 2.8 in the early 1980'-s to 2.3 children on average in 1998), and the smallest drop occurred among women born in Israel of African origins (from around 3 children on average in the early 1980'-s to 2.84 in 1998). Significantly, the group of women who are Israeli born, whose origins are also Israeli, has actually experienced an increase in birth rates (from 2.7 in the early 1980'-s to 3 in 1998). It should be noted that while all population groups have experienced consistent decrease in fertility rates since the early 1980'-s, this trend has changed in the mid 1990'-s, and since then there is a slow but steady increase back to the rates of the 1980'-s in all population groups except the Druze. It is still too early to tell whether the present trend represents a turning point or only a temporary change.

Table 8 - Live Births to Never Married Women, Various Years

		Age Of Woman					
	Total	Up to 19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+
Absolute Numbers							
1971-1973	1,479	519	639	186		135	
1978-1981	2,875	720	1,005	589	345	166	41
1990-1994	6,139	673	1,211	1,235	1,310	1,195	509
1996	1,765	184	341	420	393	293	134
1997	2,005	200	438	450	420	345	151
1998	2,179	221	476	456	472	372	181
Births to Never Married Women per 100 Live Births							
1971-1973	0.8	4.5	0.9	0.3		0.3	
1978-1981	1.0	5.3	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.2
1990-1994	1.6	7.1	1.4	1.0	1.3	2.2	4.4
1996	2.1	11.4	2.0	1.5	1.8	2.5	4.5
1997	2.3	13.3	2.6	1.5	1.8	2.8	4.6
1998	2.5	14.4	2.7	1.5	2.0	3.0	5.0
Rates per 1000 Never-Married Women in the Population aged 15-44							
1971-1973	2.3	1.4	3.4	4.1		5.2	
1978-1981	3.2	1.5	4.0	5.5	7.3	9.8	4.6
1990-1994	3.6	0.8	2.3	7.7	18.7	23.6	12.7
1996	4.3	1.0	2.5	9.1	22.8	25.7	13.7
1997	4.7	1.1	3.1	8.8	23.1	29.2	13.7

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

5.2. Fertility Treatments and Services

Fertility treatments in Israel continue to be both highly developed and well subsidized. Israel continues to hold a world record of 22 in-vitro fertilization (IVF) clinics, one such center for every 270,000 inhabitants. In May 1999, four more clinics were in the process of being approved, which would bring the rate to one center for every 230,000 inhabitants. In 1994, 8,000 cycles of IVF treatment were performed, with some women receiving more than one cycle of treatment. The cost covered by the medical insurance per one cycle of treatment stood at 12,000 NIS in 1999 (about $2,800).

Table 9 - In Vitro Fertilization in Israel, 1990-1996

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Treatment cycles	5,169	5,492	6,386	6,581	7,908		
Embryo transfers	3,811	4,000	4,708	4,922	5,735	10,888	12,345
Pregnancies	766	799	1,022	934	1,148		
Deliveries resulting in live births	542	614	749	690	790	1,539	1,950

Source: *Health in Israel 1998*

6. Life Expectancy

Table 10 - Life Expectancy, Various Years

Excludes war casualties

Year	Jews		Arabs and Others	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
1950-1954	67.2	70.1		
1960-1964	70.6	73.1		
1970-1974	70.6	73.8	68.5	71.9
1975-1979	71.7	75.3	69.2	72
1980-1984	73.1	76.5	70.8	74
1985-1989	74.1	77.8	72.7	75.5
1990-1994	75.5	79.2	73.5	76.3
1996	76.6	80.3	74.9	77.7
1997	76.4	80.5	73.9	77.3
1998	76.5	80.7	74.3	77.7

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Relating specifically to women's life expectancy, it should be noted that the life expectancy of Arab women is lower than that of Jewish women: in 1998 the life expectancy of Jewish and Arab women was 80.7 and 77.7, respectively.

7. Mortality Rates and Causes of Death

In 1997, an equal number of men and women died of illnesses – 17,000 of each sex. One third of the deaths among both men and women were from cardiovascular diseases and almost one fourth were from cancer. Deaths caused by external factors accounted for 3% of all deaths of women and for 7% of all deaths of men.

7.1. Infant Mortality Rates

From 1983 to 1999, infant mortality rate has more than halved, standing in 1999 at 5.8 deaths per every 1000 live births (4.5 deaths among Jewish newborns, and 9 deaths among non-Jewish newborns).

Table 11 - Infant Deaths, by Population Group and Cause, Various Years

Rates per 1,000 live births

Cause of Death	1970-1974	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1993-1997
Jews					
Total	18.6	11.8	8.8	6.8	5.5
Intestinal Infectious Diseases	0.6	0.0	0.0		
All Other Infectious and Parasitic Diseases	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
Pneumonia	1.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0
Congenital Anomalies	4.4	2.8	2.3	1.7	1.5
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	9.9	5.8	4.4	3.6	2.9
External Causes	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
All Other and Unspecified Causes	1.8	2.4	1.6	1.2	0.9
Arabs and Others					
Total	32.1	22.6	16.8	13.5	10.3
Intestinal Infectious Diseases	4.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1
All Other Infectious and Parasitic Diseases	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.2
Pneumonia	4.4	1.8	0.6	0.2	0.1
Congenital Anomalies	6.5	4.9	5.4	4.2	3.6
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	10.0	7.3	5.3	4.3	3.3
External Causes	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.2
All Other and Unspecified Causes	4.7	6.8	4.0	3.8	2.8

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

7.2. Maternal Mortality Rates

The maternal mortality rate has remained generally low since 1985. In 1995 maternal mortality stood at six deaths per every 100,000 live births, fewer than in the European Community, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Table 12 - Mortality Rates of Jews Aged 45 and over, Average 1996-1998

Rates per 1,000 residents

Age	Males	Females
Total	23.2	20.0
45-49	2.6	1.7
50-54	4.3	2.6
55-59	7.7	4.4
60-64	12.8	7.8
65-69	21.8	13.5
70-74	33.8	22.8
75-79	55.1	41.4
80-84	93.9	75.7
85+	175.1	154.0

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

7.3. Causes of Death

Table 13 - Deaths, By Cause, Religion and Sex, 1997

Cause of Death	Total Population		Jews		Moslems	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
	Absolute Numbers					
Total	18,510	17,596	16,377	15,965	1,484	1,135
Cancer						
Stomach	262	192	242	173	15	13
Colon	517	515	498	501	10	5
Rectum	137	101	131	95	4	5
Trachea, Bronchi, and Lung	815	348	707	318	74	13
Female Breast		869		818		29
Cervix Uteri		46		41		1
Leukemia	169	177	143	160	19	9
Other	2,279	1,879	2,113	1,763	96	62
Hypertensive Disease	255	403	235	375	11	22
Acute Myocardial Infarction	1,108	1,024	1,001	947	71	50
Other Ischaemic Heart Disease	2,125	1,937	1,905	1,819	112	72
Other Heart Disease	1,054	1,147	933	1,033	79	81
Abortion		1		1		0
Motor Vehicle Accidents	389	136	274	108	86	20

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

7.4. Breast Cancer and Mammograms

A 1998 national survey of women's health found that 52% of Jewish women and 24% of Arab women had a mammography screening in the two years prior to the survey. More information on Arab women and mammograms is supplied below.

8. Hospitalization

8.1. General

Overall, women visit doctors 30% more frequently than men (7.7 visits a year per woman and 5.9 per man), but the frequency of women's hospitalization in comparison to the rate of men's hospitalization in fact vary greatly according to age groups. Hospitalization rates for male infants, up to one year of age, are 30% higher than those for baby girls. Hospitalization of females under the age of 15 remains lower than that of their male counterparts. After the age of 15, hospitalization rate among Israeli women exceeds the rate of men, and continues to rise sharply in every age group. Between 15-44, hospitalization rates among women (not including admissions to maternity wards) are almost 60% higher than those of men. By the age of 45, the hospitalization rate of males and females is approximately equal, and beyond the age of 65, the hospitalization rate of males rises by almost 40% above that of females. Not surprisingly, higher hospitalization rates for women correspond with their fertility years.

8.2. Mental Health and Psychiatric Hospitalization

In 1995, women comprised 44% of all psychiatric hospitalizations. Although the rate of hospitalized men exceeded the rate of hospitalized women until the ages of 45, hospitalization rates for attempted suicide and self-inflicted injury were higher for women than for men in all of the age groups (except for the over-75s, in which rates are identical for men and women). Indeed, women comprise 60-65% of all reported attempted suicides. In the younger age group, over 80% of attempted suicides between 1990-1996 were female.

In the 2000 Brookdale survey 39% of the women were found to be suffering a high level of depression – a rate similar to that of their US counterparts. However, only 9% of the Israeli women, compared to 17% of the American, were diagnosed by their doctors as suffering from depression. The researchers view this as further support to the theory of under-diagnosis of depression in women, and the gravity of this problem in Israel. They also reveal the difficulties women have in access to mental health services, and call for developing more frameworks for these services.

9. Risk Behaviors as Health factors

9.1. Smoking

Smoking is twice as prevalent among men as among women: 34% and 16% respectively among those aged over 20. In the 25-44 age group, the rates are 42% for men and 21% for women. One explanation for the high numbers of smokers in this age group is the high prevalence of smoking during army service.

Table 13A — Trends in the Prevalence of Smoking among Army Inductees (Aged 18)

Year	Women	Men
1986	25%	33%
1987	21%	30%
1988	20%	26%
1989	17%	27.5%
1990	17.5%	27%
1991	16%	26%
1992	16%	27%
1993	23%	28%
1994	21%	27%
1995	23%	32%
1996	27%	27%
1997	27%	28%

Source: *Health in Israel 1998*

9.2. Eating Disorders

As in all industrialized countries, Israeli women and girls are at high risk for eating disorders, with intense pressure to meet an elusive and unhealthy ideal of thinness. For teenagers, Israel seems to be the dieting capital of the world: in 1994, about one in three teenage girls reported dieting to lose weight. This finding put Israel ahead of 23 other developed countries for dieting among teenage girls. Interestingly, though boys in Israel diet less than do girls, they too lead in international ranking of dieting. In a study conducted in the late 1980s, 2.5% of women aged 21-45 reported vomiting as a form of weight control; 1.3% of women in this age group said they had been diagnosed as anorexic (Woman's Health in Israel, p.147). More on eating disorders is found under the new section on the Girl-Child.

9.3. Violence as a Health Factor

Violence against women is increasingly being recognized as an important factor in women's state of physical and mental health. Most domestic violence takes the form of rape and physical abuse. According to the WHO Regional Office for Europe, Israeli women were ranked in 1992 close to the European Union's average with respect to mortality from homicide and purposeful injury. The 2000 Brookdale research - which for the first time provided formal findings on the extent of physical and sexual violence against women as well as findings concerning domestic violence against women in Israel – found that 2% of all adult women in Israel (34,000) were victims of rape, 4% (68,000) were victims of sexual violence, and 8% (136,000) were victims of physical violence. More than one in every ten women (11.5%) have experienced some form of domestic violence, ranging from threats to physical or sexual attacks – about 200,000 women which according to some researchers should be considered a minimum estimate.

Indeed, the distressing reality of domestic violence as a major health hazard is confirmed by the numbers obtained by the recently established Ministry of Health database which quantifies the number of women and children admitted to emergency wards with injuries following domestic violence and neglect - and who were subsequently referred to social services - in 27 of the 33 general hospitals in Israel. The data show that in 1998, 1512 women aged 18-64, 131 women over the age of 65, and 1,860 children were admitted to emergency room as a result of violence. Among women under age 65, the overwhelming majority of the cases (89%) were of physical abuse. Among older women (65+), just over half were cases of physical abuse, and 35% were cases of neglect or withholding of care. Of the children, just over half (52%) were girls. Among younger children (0-5), a slightly larger proportion of children reaching the emergency room (55%) were boys, predominantly as a result of neglect and withholding of care. In the 6-14 age group 55% were girls. The category with the largest sex difference was that of sexual abuse, where twice as many girls as boys were victims. Among adolescents (15-18) girls predominated in all categories of abuse, with the exception of the neglect category.

Table 14 - Distribution of Adolescents (Aged 15-18) Admitted to Emergency Rooms with Injuries Following Violence, 1998

	Males	Females
Sexual Abuse	9	61
Physical Abuse	34	83
Neglect	23	18
Other	38	64

Source *Health in Israel 1998*

Despite the aforementioned alarming statistics and contrary to recommendations made by the 1996 Parliamentary-Investigative Committee, medical professionals in Israel still lack appropriate training to handle domestic violence and violence against women. On the academic training level, an inquiry with the Ministry of Health in 1997 revealed that none of the medical schools had included the subjects of domestic violence and violence against women as specific courses in the regular curriculum. On the concrete-practical level, statistics from the 2000 Brookdale survey found that a very low rate (22%) of the women victims of domestic violence discussed it with medical professionals (doctors, nurses, etc.), where most of the conversations (77%) having been initiated by women and only 9% by the health professionals. Even when conversations took place, only 16% of the women were referred to the police, and 32% were referred to domestic violence support services. Likewise, while 73% of the women who had been subjected to sexual and physical violence and turned to medical care were asked about the cause of their injuries, only 18% being referred to support services such as the sexual violence help centers

10. AIDS

The total number of AIDS patients in Israel during 1999 was 622 (494 male and 128 female). That year, 440 of these patients died. There were 2,078 known cases of HIV-positive individuals in Israel in 1999. Of these, 34% (707) were women, a definite increase from 1995, when women comprised 26% of HIV-positive individuals. Most of these women had contracted the virus outside of Israel. Since the first statistical documentation of AIDS in Israel in the early 1980s, the proportion of female HIV carriers has increased, significantly, especially since 1992.

Table 15 - AIDS In Israel, Cumulative Totals up to the End of 1999

Exposure Category	Women		Men	
	AIDS Patients	HIV+ Carriers	AIDS Patients	HIV+ Carriers
Total	128	707	494	1,281
Homosexual/ Bisexual Males			185	276
Intravenous Drug Users	14	40	79	171
Persons with Hemophilia		1	33	44
Other Blood/ Component Recipients	7	2	10	5
Heterosexual Contacts				
Partners of One of the Above 4 Categories	19	28	1	2
Persons Presumed: Exposure Abroad	67	476	125	524
Child of At-Risk/ Infected Parent	9	27	8	27
Not Known	2	71	27	172

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

11. Women in Health Care

11.1. Women in Medical Schools

By 2000, women made up almost 50% of all medical students in Israel; a 10% rise in one decade, and comprised 68% of third degree medical students.

11.2. Women as Medical Personnel

Table 16 - Medical Personnel by Age, Gender and Profession, 1998

	Physicians	Thereof: Specialists	Dentists	Pharmacist
Total Males - **Absolute Numbers**	17,898	8,137	5,247	2,234
Percent				
Total	61.8	71.2	63.4	41.6
To 30	1.8	0	5.2	4.8
30-44	20.5	19.3	27.8	12.1
45-54	18	25.9	13.8	6.5
55-64	8.7	10.3	7.1	5.2
65-74	6.3	8.4	4.8	3.8
75+	6.6	7.2	4.6	9.2
Total Females - **Absolute Numbers**	10,749	3,284	2,894	2,749
Percent				
Total	37.1	28.7	34.4	52.9
To 30	2	0	4.2	7.9
30-44	14.1	11.1	14	17.6
45-54	8.5	7.5	7.1	11.4
55-64	5.5	3.5	4.2	5.8
65-74	4.2	3.9	2.6	3.7
75+	2.9	2.7	2.3	6.4

Source: Ministry of Health, Department of Medical Professions

While by 2000, more than 37% of all practicing doctors in Israel were women (10,749 out of about 28,600), no woman heads a major hospital, one woman heads a peripheral mental hospital, one serves as a deputy head of an intermediate size hospital, and four women are administrative directors of hospitals.

11.3. Senior Positions for Women in the Health System

The **National Insurance Law - 1994** established a Health Council whose functions are described in the Law. Section 49 of the Law stipulates the makeup of the Council, stating that "in the makeup of members that are appointed amongst government workers there will be representation of both sexes in at a least a quarter of the total makeup."

In four out of the five districts of the Health Ministry, the district's doctor is a woman. The of each district has extensive authorities that are given validation by the ordinance for the nation's health and the regulations of the Health Ministry on different topics such as public health, preventative medicine, family care (mother and child/nursing), supervision and licensing of medical institutions, burial, etc.

In addition, the Ombudsperson in relation to the National Health Insurance Law is a woman, filling an important statutory role on the topic of insured persons' rights for state health insurance.

12. Arab Women's Health

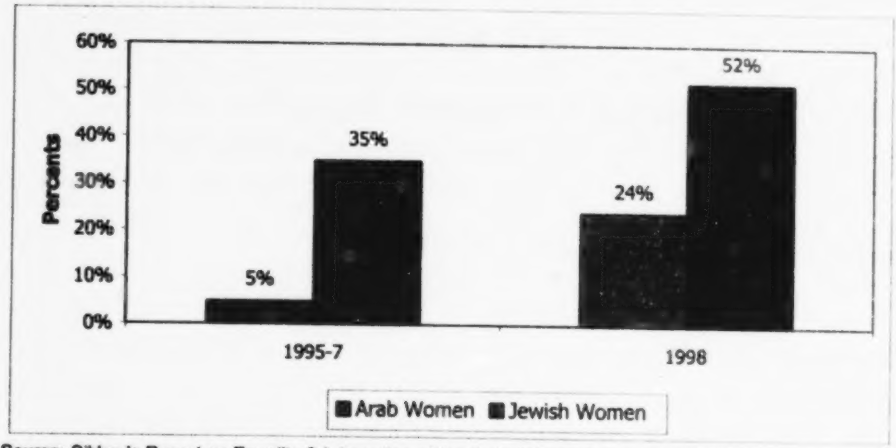
12.1 The Relationship with the Doctor Providing Treatment, Access to Services and Health Awareness

According to the 2000 JDC-Brookdale Institute Survey (discussed earlier under Article 5), an astoundingly low percentage of Arab women are treated by female doctors (8%), compared to 49% of Jewish women. Amongst Arab women, 22% (in comparison with 8% of Jewish women) do not feel comfortable talking to their family doctor about issues relating to their health. In general, Arab women express a relatively low level of appreciation for their doctors and visit them less often than Jewish women. Eighty-three percent of Jewish women saw a gynecologist regularly, compared to 64% of the Arabs. Most of the Arab women (60%) preferred a female gynecologist, compared to 33% of the Jewish women. Higher rates of Arab women said that at least once during the previous year they had not received medical care when they believed they required it (41%, compared to about 10% among Jewish women); had not seen a specialist when they believed they needed it (57%, compared to about 20% among Jewish women); and had not bought medication due to cost (29%, compared to about 15% among Jewish women). Higher rates of Arab women also reported encountering difficulties when seeking medical or mental health care. Regarding health promotion activities, lower rates of Arab women reported discussing health promotion issues such as smoking, diet, physical activity, Hormone Replacing Treatment and calcium intake with their physician than did Jewish women. More than twice as many Jewish women said they knew about osteoporosis or took calcium supplements that did Arab women.

12.2 Mammograms in the Arab Sector

As mentioned in the previous Report, according to the **National Health Insurance Law - 1994**, the sick funds cover all women in the 50-74 age group for a mammography examinations once every two years. During 1998, a project for early detection of cancer was initiated in the Arab sector. The project yielded an almost five-fold growth in the rate of Arab women undergoing mammography screenings, while still falling behind Jewish women. The full rates are presented in the chart below.

Chart 2 - Mammography Examinations by Sector, 1995-7, 1998



Source: Sikkuy's Report on Equality & Integration of the Arab Citizens in Israel 1999-2000

12.3 Other Health Data

Statistics from a survey conducted by the Center for Disease Control Amongst Females, published in 1999, indicate that 17% of Jewish women and 5% of Arab women receive hormone replacement therapy. An additional 13% of Jewish women and 6% of Arab women have received this treatment in the past.

Of the 520 maternity centers that currently exist in Israel there are 175 (35%) in Arab settlements.

One of the Brookdale 2000 survey's findings is that a higher proportion of women with a high level of depression exists within the Arab sector (45% of Arab speaking women interviewed, compared to 34% of the survey's Hebrew speaking subjects). Moreover, 39% of Arab speaking women suffering from a high level of depression were not diagnosed as such by a physician (compared to 28% of Hebrew speaking women).

Article 13

Social and Economic Benefits

1. Social Benefits and the Welfare State in Israel

1.1. Social Benefits

The social insurance system in Israel covers all major contingencies of income loss in modern industrial societies, including short-term payments aimed to replace the wages of those temporarily out of the work force (due to dismissal, work injury, giving birth or military reserve service) and long-term payments, aiming to guarantee subsistence to those permanently out of the work force due to old age or disability, to dependants and to families facing the economic burden of raising children. All long-term benefits (except for child allowances, which are nominated in monetary values) are calculated as a given percentage of the average monthly wage, which as of January 2001 stands at 6,964 NIS (approximately $1,700). The National Insurance Institute (NII) is responsible for the administration of the social insurance programs.

The issue of social Benefits has a special significance to women due to their high presence within social benefits recipients in Israel. Thus, for instance, in 2000, women comprised close to 73% of all recipients of long-term care benefit, a figure obviously related to women's higher longevity. Furthermore, while only 12.2% of the male recipients of old-age pensions also received income supplement, 20% of the female recipients received both benefits.

The following will present developments and changes in this area since the submission of the previous Report.

1.1.1. Maternity Insurance

One of the main social benefits women may receive is the *maternity insurance*, which covers a *hospitalization grant*, a *maternity grant*, a *birth allowance* and a *maternity leave allowance*. A 1998 amendment to the **National Insurance Law - 1995** provides for the granting of a maternity grant, with adequate adjustments, to those who have adopted a child under the age of 10 years (when a couple adopts a child, a grant is given only to one of the parents). A recent 2000 amendment to the law has doubled the amount of maternity grant payable from the fifth child onward, and set it as 40% of the average wage.

In 2000, 132,000 women received a maternity grant, a 2% increase from the 1999 figures. In addition, close to 70,600 women received maternity leave allowances (equal to the woman's net income), constituting 53% of all births that year. While this rate suggests that only slightly more than half of the women who gave birth in 2000 were eligible for the allowance in terms of working the required amount of months prior to the birth, it still reflects a consistent increase in the rate of women who are eligible for the allowance. In fact, it is more than a 60% increase from 1990, which is explained by the increase in women's general participation in the workforce, as discussed under Article 11 above. Significantly, according to 1997 data, 94.5% of the women who received maternity leave allowance in 1997 were Jewish, a rate which is totally disproportionate to their rate among women who gave birth that year, which was only 70.5%. This disproportion reflects the huge difference in the rate of Jewish and non-Jewish women's participation in the workforce: 93% of the women who participated in the workforce in 1997 were Jewish, and only 7% were non-Jewish.

Another benefit under maternity insurance is the *high-risk pregnancy grant*, which entitles a woman on high-risk pregnant leave to receive the equivalent of her salary from social security. Recent amendments to the **National Insurance Law - 1995** have refined and expanded this benefit in several ways. Thus, a 1998 amendment to the **National Insurance Law - 1995** provides for the inclusion of high-risk pregnancy as part of the work period.
In addition, a 2000 amendment to the Law raised the limit of this benefit setting it at 100% of the average wage (compared to 70% in previous years).

1.1.2. Old Age and Survivors' (Widows') Benefits

Old age and survivors' benefits comprise the largest insurance branch at the NII (34.7% of the total benefits paid in 2000). The number of old age and widows' benefits recipients rose to more than 657,000 in 2000, a 3.4% rise from the previous year. This rise reflects mainly the growing number of the elderly population in Israel, and is not due to immigration, since the flow of immigration has slowed down in recent years.

The basic old-age benefit amounts to 16% and 24% of the average wage for a single person or for a couple, respectively. Recipients of old age and widows' benefits who have no other income, or whose income from another source is low, are eligible to receive income guarantee according to the **Income Support Law - 1980**. In 2000, this amounted to 30.8% of all recipients of old age and widows' benefits.

Various attempts have been made in recent years to legislate an obligatory pension law for all workers in Israel, thus far without success. It must be noted, in this context, that more women than men suffer from the lack of employment pension, since more women retire without ever having participated in the formal labor-force, or without ever having a pension plan, or without accumulating enough pension rights due to their irregular work patterns.

1.1.3. Disability Insurance

Every Israeli citizen aged 18 or over and not yet 60 (women) or 65 (men), and whose degree of disability is at least 75% is entitled to a means-tested monthly *disability pension* at the rate of 25% the average wage for a single person, with additional dependent's increment paid for the dependent spouse and children. A housewife, however, is entitled to a dependent's increment for her children only. Other benefits under General Disability Insurance include *attendance allowance*, a *grant following decease*, a *disabled child benefit* and a *special benefit for a new immigrant*.

In December 2000, more than 138,000 people received disability Insurance benefits, a 12% increase from the previous year. The rate of working women among recipients was 32.3%, while 10.3% of recipients were housewives.

1.1.4. Unemployment Benefits

A 1999 amendment to the **National Insurance Law - 1995** reduced the limit for unemployment benefit, setting it at the average wage for the first 5 months of unemployment, and 2/3 of the average wage from the sixth month onwards. Two other amendments from 2000 reduced the total period of unemployment benefits eligibility in all categories.

1.1.5. Children's Allowances

Children's allowances are progressive allowances, that is the amount of the allowance in a given family increases from the third child onward. A 2000 amendment to the **National Insurance Law - 1995** further emphasized this characteristic by substantially raising the amount of children's allowances paid from the fifth child onward (by 47%, 33% and 43% for the fifth, sixth and every additional child, respectively), whereas no change in the amount paid for the first four children was made.

1.1.6. Alimony Payments

In 2000, 22,884 women received alimony payments, an increase of 25.2% from their number 4 years earlier in 1996, as appeared in the previous Report. The overwhelming majorities (99.4%) were women with children: 36.8% had one child, 32.9% had two children, 17.2%

had three children and 12.5% had four children or more. In 2001, the allowances stood at 25% of the average wage for the alimony of a woman alone (i.e.1,741 NIS, approx. $425 per month), 39.8% of the average wage for a woman with one child (i.e. 2,789 NIS, approx. $680 per month) and 49.8% for a woman with two children (i.e. 3,485 NIS, approx. $850 per month).

1.2. Poverty of Women

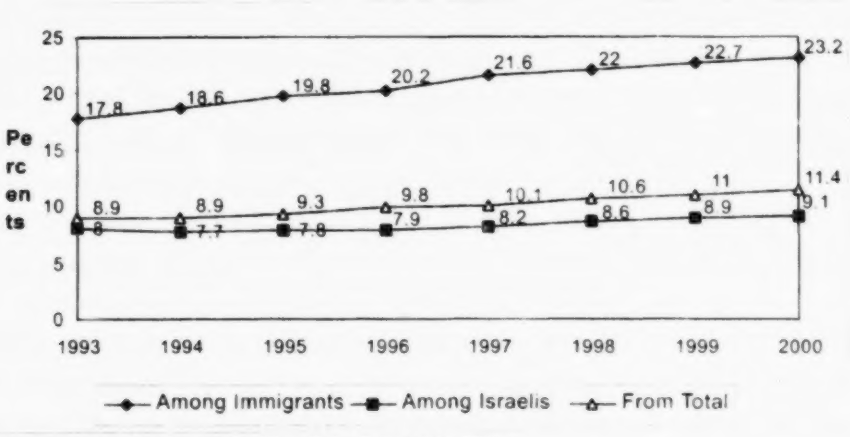
Statistics supplied by the NII (National Insurance Institute) show almost no gender-related differences regarding the incidence of poverty among the population at large, and poverty is documented in more or less equal proportions among men and women. Thus, in 1999, out of 2,003,000 adult women, there were 341,500 living in families below the poverty line (defined as 50% of the median disposable income). Out of 1,855,000 adult men, there were 282,700 living below the poverty line. These statistics show that women constitute 54.7% of the persons with income below the poverty line (having constituted 54.3% in 1995). Since women constituted 52% of the adult population in 1999, the conclusion that emerges is that the proportion of women in poverty is only slightly larger than their proportion in general in the population.

While this shows that in contrast to other western countries, an overall phenomenon of feminization of poverty has not taken place in Israel, analysis of further statistics reveals that among specific population groups with higher poverty rates, women's presence is higher. The sections that follow will discuss these groups.

1.2.1. Single-Parent Families

In 2000, single-parent families comprised 11.4% of all families in Israel, an increase from 9.3% in 1995. Moreover, while the yearly growth of the general number of families with children in Israel is 2%, the yearly growth of single-parent families has been 6-8% throughout the second half of the 1990's. A partial explanation for this growth is the immigration from the former USSR: in 2000 the rate of single-parent families among immigrants was 23.2%. Among immigrants the number of divorced and widowed women (about 6,000) is three times greater than the number of divorced and widowed men. Of the almost 105,000 single-parent households, in close to a third (31,826) of them the parent was an immigrant who came to Israel after 1990.

Chart 1 - The Rate of Single Parent Families, by Year, 1993-2000

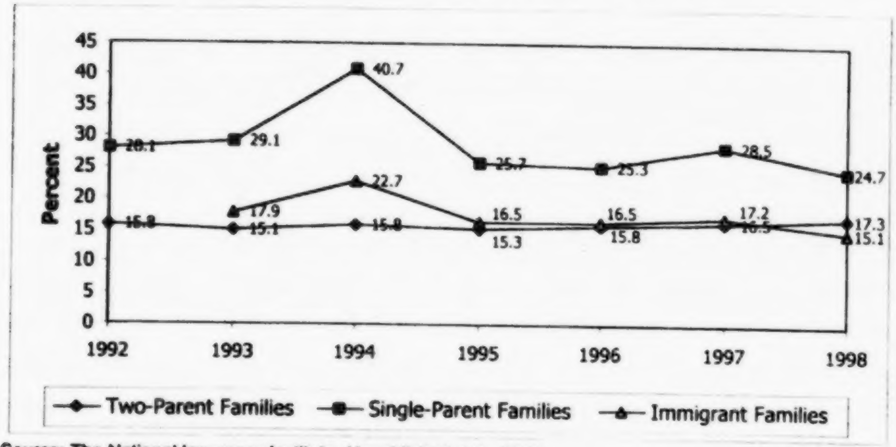


Source: The National Insurance Institute, *Unpublished data*, 2000

The overwhelming majority of the single-parent families (96%) are headed by women. The incidence of poverty among single-parent families is much higher than within the general society: in 1997, 28.5% of the single-parent families were below the poverty line, compared with 16.5% of two-parent families with children in general. This marks an increase from a rate of 25.3% in 1996, following a sharp decline in 1995 and 1996 as a result of the **Law to Reduce the Scope of Poverty and Income Gaps**. The incidence of poverty among children of single-parent families is even higher, and stood at 36.5% in 1997, also an increase from 28.4% in 1996. This means that every third child of a single-parent (overwhelmingly single mothers) was below the poverty line. The general incidence of poverty among children in 1997 stood at 21.8%, meaning that every fifth child in Israel was below the poverty line. NII researchers explain that the main reasons for the regression in the economic state of single-parent families are gradual erosion in income-support benefits relative to the average wage, and the increase in the rate of single-parent families where the parent is unemployed.

Nevertheless, data from 1998 is more encouraging, as poverty among single-parent families and immigrant families decreased substantially (from 28.5% in 1997 to 24.7% in 1998 for single-parent families, and from 17.2% to 15.1% for immigrant families). It should be noted that 1998 data relates to a larger population survey group, that includes residents of East Jerusalem as well as self-employed persons.

Chart 2 - Poverty in Families with Children, by Year, 1992-1998



Source: The National Insurance Institute, *Unpublished data*, 2000.

1.2.2. Poverty among the Elderly

Current statistics from the NII mark a substantial decrease in the level of poverty among the elderly, especially among elderly women. Thus, in 1998, 15.9% of elderly women were considered poor, compared to 16.3% of elderly men (the figures for 1995 were 19.2% and 18.9%, respectively).

Article 14

Rural Women

Since rural population in Israel is more or less limited to the Bedouin society and to some parts of the Arab population, it was decided to include further discussion of other vulnerable groups of women under this Article. Thus, this Article first discusses Bedouin women, and then proceeds to discuss women immigrants from Ethiopia, and women with disabilities. Both these subjects were not discussed in the previous Report, and the latter was specifically requested by the CEDAW Committee's in its Concluding Observations.

1. Bedouin Women

Only 8.6% of the Israeli population live in rural localities. The following paragraphs focus on one of the major population groups within this sector, the Bedouin community in the southern Israeli Negev desert. The Negev Bedouin numbers approximately 100,000 men and women. Half of them live in one of 7 Bedouin localities that were officially founded and recognized by the State, while the remaining half are scattered across the desert, living in villages and semi-nomadic encampments. A basic description of Bedouin women's situation appeared in the previous Report. For some more information regarding Bedouin women's personal status see Article 16 below.

1.1. Education

The Bedouin population in Israel suffers from low educational rates. In general, six out of ten Bedouin pupils in the Negev drop out of school, and only two per one thousand Negev Bedouin have university degrees.

The higher dropout rates for Bedouin girls remain a problem. Recent data shows that throughout grades 1-9 the boys make up more than half (51.4%) of the total number of pupils, except in grades 4 and 8. In the ninth grade boys already make up 53.7% of the pupils. In the unrecognized localities the situation is even worse: girls make up only 43.7% of the ninth graders.

However, there is some development regarding the Bedouin's attitude to education, particularly to girls' education, so that experts now contend that most of the Bedouins believe in the importance of education and are not against educating their daughters. The problem is not attitude but economics, since parents are unable to finance academic studies. Consequently, special programs to encourage Bedouin women to continue into academic studies, such as developed by Ben Gurion University of the Negev, the academic institution closest to the areas in which the Bedouin reside, are of particular significance.

Some progress in terms of women's participation in academic studies is indeed indicated in the following data. Between 1977 and 1998, 143 Bedouin students completed their studies at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. The number of graduates is increasing annually, from one graduate in 1977 to 18 graduates in 1998. While the number of the Bedouin graduates is increasing we can still note a large majority of males, with some improvement in recent years, as depicted in the following table:

Table 1 - Bedouin Graduates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, by Year and Gender

Year	Gender of Graduates	
	Males	Females
1977	1	0
1978	1	0
1980	1	0
1981	2	0
1985	1	0
1986	9	0
1987	5	0
1988	6	1
1989	6	0
1990	6	0
1991	5	0
1992	12	2
1993	10	0
1994	11	3
1995	18	0
1996	8	1
1997	15	1
1998	14	4

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Negev Bedouin, no 1 1999

In 1999, there were some 250 Bedouin graduate and undergraduate students at Ben Gurion University; 95 were women, 13 of who are graduate students. In addition, 29 of the first year students were Bedouin women.

Most of the female Bedouin students are enrolled in the faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Health Sciences and come from very large families living close to or below the poverty line. Before they could enroll in the university their grades had to be improved through private preparatory programs so they could close the gap separating them from other Israeli students.

1.2. Employment and Welfare

The Bedouins experience low participation in the labor force, and a high level of welfare services recipients, higher than that of the national rate.

With regards to women's salaries, the average monthly wage of a female Bedouin employee is only 50% of an Israeli female employee (while a male Bedouin employee's monthly wage is 55.8% of Israeli employee), as indicated by the following table, comparing the average monthly income of employees in Rahat (Israel's largest Bedouin locality) with the southern district and with Israel as a whole:

Table 2 - Average Monthly Wage of Employees, by Gender, 1994, 1995

In NIS

	Men			Women		
	No. of Employees	Average Monthly Wage		No. of Employees	Average Monthly Wage	
	(30.11.1996)	1994	1995	(30.11.1996)	1994	1995
Total Israel	1,105,964	5,315	6,015	985,025	2,934	3,411
Southern District	151,366	4,799	5,296	126,287	2,597	2,951
Rahat	3,201	2,941	3,360	692	1,313	1,726

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Negev Bedouin, no 1 1999

Some progress regarding women's participation in the labor force is ironically indicated by the fact that women in the recognized localities have started turning to the Employment Service to receive unemployment benefits.

The low income per person in Bedouin families is reflected in the large number of recipients of income support benefits, which is almost six times higher than the national rate, as indicated in the following table:

Table 3 - Rates of Recipients of National Insurance Institute Benefits, 1996

	Old Age and/or Survivors' Benefits per 1000 Elderly	Benefit to Disabled Child per 1000 children	Income Support per 1000 Households	Percent of Children Receiving Child Support Allowence
Total Israel	896.0	6.3	53.6	99.0
Rahat	658.5	9.8	303.9	95.0

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Negev Bedouin, no 1 1999

1.3. Health

1.3.1. Infant Mortality

Infant mortality is still high in the Bedouin community compared to the total rate in Israel. For example, in 1996 there were 12.1 deaths per thousand live births in Rahat, compared to 4.5 among the Negev's Jewish population, or to the national figure which stood at 6.3 that year. Major causes of death of Bedouin infants were congenital anomalies, premature births, respiratory distress syndrome and infections diseases.

1.3.2. Other Health Indicators

A glance at the demographic data and the figures on immunization of infants and children reveals significant improvement within the Bedouin community. The rate of Bedouin infants immunized up to the age of one year is increasing from year to year, from 43.8% in 1985 to 80.5 % in 1995. The percent of toddlers immunized up to age two has increased at the same rate. Likewise, the number of infants registered at a Mother and Child clinic is on the rise too. In 1995 82.8% of all Bedouin infants were registered, compared to only 58.4% in 1985.

However, the data on immunization of infants and children reveal a gap between the recognized and unrecognized localities, with a higher percentage in the former. In both types of localities, most of the children receive the first inoculation of the triplex vaccine but less get the second and third inoculations in the unrecognized localities. In the unrecognized localities, in particular, there is lack of awareness of the importance of the vaccine and of completing the course of three inoculations.

As for Bedouin women's physical and mental health in general, a survey conducted by Ben-Gurion University researchers in 1999 among a representative sample of 202 Bedouin women (and a control group of 526 Jewish women) revealed higher rates of repetitive unitary infections, anemia, respiratory disorders reported by Bedouin women, as well as higher rates of exposure to family violence. Likewise, more Bedouin women reported depression and low self-esteem; the former in connection to family violence and the latter in connection to spouse's unemployment (36% of the Bedouin women reported unemployment of their spouses). The average number of children per Bedouin women who participated in the survey was 5.8, 14.4% were pregnant at the time and 55% reported being pregnant the year before the survey. The average marital age was 18.6, 60% reported being married to a family relative, and 35% reported being married in bigamous marriages.

1.3.3. Ritual Female Genital Operations (Female Circumcision)

No significant change took place in this area since the previous Report.

2. Immigrant Women From Ethiopia

2.1. Preface

During the 1980's, the State of Israel absorbed immigrants from two main countries: Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union. The Ethiopian immigration differs from the Soviet one in several aspects. First of all, in its size: In 1990, the Soviet immigration reached an outstanding number of approximately 30,000 immigrants per month, whereas the total number of Ethiopian immigrants reached 50,000. Secondly, Ethiopian Jewry evoked a special interest in Israeli and Jewish consciousness emanating from both its uniqueness and heroic operations taken prior the immigration. Finally, but most significantly, comes the immense cultural difference stemming from the distinct background of the Ethiopian immigration to Israel. These cultural differences have had major implications for the women immigrants.

Several factors have joined to effect the condition of the Ethiopian women immigrants: the general condition of women in Israeli society; the immigration process and the difficulties in the transition into Israeli society; and above all the culture gap between the Ethiopian and Israeli societies. The family structure in Ethiopia was traditional and patriarchal with a set hierarchy and strict rules. The division of labor between man and woman was clear. The father had a dominant rule in the household, which was expressed by his control of the financial resources. He was also in charge of decision-making, and privileged in acquiring an education. The man worked outside the home, being the sole provider of the family, and was the family representative. Handicraft, such as weaving and pottery, were mainly done by men. Consequently, the Ethiopian woman was totally dependent on the man. The woman was responsible for the household, raising the children and assisting the men in working the land. As a result, Ethiopian women immigrated to Israel lacking a profession.

On the other hand, there were certain social arrangements in Ethiopia intended for the protection of women's rights, some of which have been lost during the absorption into Israeli society. These included preserving the woman's maiden name after marriage; equal right in acquiring aid from the community during a marital dispute; equal right to divorce; right to have a resting period during menstruation and after birth. Furthermore, every woman in Ethiopia had one or two "protectors" who were usually her husband's friends that were in charge of protecting her from being hurt by her husband.

2.2. Education

The majority of the Ethiopian Jews did not take part in the educational system in Ethiopia. Among the few who did, women were a minority. Therefore, most Ethiopian women immigrants over the age of 18 do not have any formal education. On the other hand, their spoken Hebrew is better than that of the male immigrants due to having more contacts with the Israeli social institutions and agencies.

The condition of the younger women differs from that of the elder women, in that they participate in various educational institutions. The dropout rate is higher among men than women in all the various educational institutions. In High Schools, the dropout rate among the Ethiopian community as a whole is higher than among the Israeli population, 6.2% compared to 3.5%, respectively. Among the Ethiopian community itself, there is an especially high rate of dropouts among the boys compared with that of the girls (9% and 3.5% respectively). On the other hand, more than twice the number of men than women completed their studies in Higher Education Institutes.

2.3. Health Awareness

Ethiopian female immigrants are less aware of the use of contraceptives and of pregnancy tests. In addition, they are not aware of preventive testing such as breast cancer detection. Furthermore, as a result of keeping secrecy in issues concerning sexual transmitted diseases, they are more vulnerable to contracting Aids.

2.3.1 Ritual Female Genital Operations (Female Circumcision)

An academic study published in 1997 revealed that Ethiopian Jewish women immigrants to Israel report that ritual female genital operation was normative in their culture in Ethiopia, but expressed no desire to continue the custom in Israel (Grisaru, Lazer & Belmaker, 1997). The study found a variety of lesions in a third among 113 women who had undergone gynecological examination, with 27% showing total or partial clitoral amputation. The study reports the total cessation of the custom among this community after immigration to Israel.

2.4. The Family Unit

The role changes within the family that took place upon immigration to Israel are a source of tension in the home. Generally, the men are threatened by these changes which signify their loss of their previous uncontested control, and aim in preserving the previous family structure, whereas the women are interested in adopting the new changes. When conflicts arise, women tend to find aid in the social institutions within Israeli society, more so than men do. These institutions represent equal rights for both sexes and are run mostly by women. The men prefer to seek aid in the traditional manner by turning to mediation by relatives and elderly who represent the traditional Ethiopian social order and are run by men.

There is a relatively large number of Ethiopian single mothers, a phenomenon new to the Ethiopian community in Israel, that didn't exist in Ethiopia. Divorced or widowed women in Ethiopia would go back to their original families. In Israel, the original families are incapable of absorbing the single women due to poor housing conditions and financial difficulties. In addition to financial and parental difficulties, such women are exposed to harassment by men from the community, including their former husbands. The following table gives some idea as to the scope of the phenomenon of single women as a result of divorce or widowhood among Ethiopian women. Particularly noticeable is the high rate of divorcees among the immigrants.

Table 4 - 1990-1995 Immigrants and the Jewish Population in Israel, by Gender and Family Status

	Total (number)	% Married	% Divorced	% Widoed	% Never married
All immigrants					
Women	264,065	56.6	11.7	14.6	17.3
Men	218,195	66.6	4.6	3.4	25.4
U.S.S.R Immigrants					
Women	229,845	56.4	12.4	15.2	16
Men	186,910	67.9	4.8	3.6	23.7
Ethiopia Immigrants					
Women	9,305	51.2	13.1	9.1	26.7
Men	8,600	52.8	3.6	1.2	42.4
Other Immigrants					
Women	24,915	58.6	5	10.5	25.9
Men	22,685	61.1	3.1	2.4	33.4
Rest of Jewish population					
Women	1,460,330	58	4.9	11.3	25.8
Men	1,379,055	61.3	2.7	2.6	33.4

Source Central Bureau of Statistics. *1995 Census*, 1999

2.5. Employment

One of the most important parameters measuring the success of an immigrant community is its integration into the workforce. Several studies were conducted by the Brookdale Institute during the 90's to evaluate this, and some of their findings are presented below. These study were conducted among men and women of various ages who had participated in various studies and job-training programs offered to Ethiopian immigrants by the Brookdale Institute. The studies were conducted as a tool to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the different programs.

2.5.1. Professional Job Training

Much concern and efforts are invested in vocational training for the Ethiopian immigrants in order to equip them with knowledge and skills needed in Israeli industry. Special programs are geared for adults with emphasis on job training, and for the youth, with emphasis both on job training and on social integration.

Allocation of vocational training resources is problematic in terms of women's participation, since state funded professional job training is given to the family member who is regarded by the authorities as the family provider. In most cases, the family representative and provider is the male, thereby leaving the female under his patronage. Furthermore, vocational training is characterized by a sex biased occupational division. Study programs in absorption centers offer different workshops for men and women. Women are offered workshops training them for domestic occupations such as childcare and house chores, whereas men are trained for occupations outside the home. Nevertheless, where there are no male family members, female immigrants receive equal job training.

2.5.2. Finding Employment

Among the adult graduates of vocational training courses, the Brookdale studies found gender differences in employment rates. Most of the women graduates did not work in the field that they were trained, and a large number worked in non-professional jobs. In comparison, about 75% of the male graduates worked in the areas in which they were trained. Some of the men already worked at the time that they joined the course. Among the youth, on the other hand, there was no difference in the rate of employment among the sexes. About 50% of the Youth Project graduates and 80% of the Higher Education Institutes worked, both males and females. One common trait was found throughout the study, namely the visibly higher average salary of the men than that of the women.

2.5.3. The Effect of the Marital Status on Employment

Fewer married women join the workforce than single women. For example, among the graduates of the Youth Project 28% of the married women compared to 54% of the non-married join the workforce. The results of the study also indicate a higher rate of employment of women who are not mothers than that of women who are. The opposite is true with respect to the men: a higher rate of workforce participation was found with married men or men who have children.

2.5.4. Professional Ambitions among Ethiopian Youth

An interesting part of the study was ascertaining professional and personal aspirations among Ethiopian youth, including family roles. Almost all the girls (95%) want to work after they are married. Very few said that they would not work or that it depends on their spouses' approval. However, a much lower percentage (65%) said that they would work once they had children. It is important to note that a much lower number of men said that they would want their wives to work, but 20% said that it was dependent on their spouses' opinion. It would seem that the stand on the women working is independent of their economic status. Neither the men nor the women saw economic distress ("only if we need money") as an important reason for women to work, whether after marriage or after childbirth. No noticeable difference was found between the girls that have been in Israel a short time and those that have been here longer.

Among high school students gender difference was found with regard to the vocation that they expect to acquire for the future. These expectations reflect the students' ambitions and how they view themselves as adults. These expectations can direct the abilities of the students to reach certain goals. Generally, it was found that Girls prefer to work in more academic fields- medicine, law and psychology, while, more boys prefer occupations in liberal and technical professions- engineers, teaching, journalism or acting.

3. Women With Disabilities

3.1. General and Legal Framework

About 10% of the Israeli population are people with disabilities. It is estimated that about half of them are women, although there has never been a thorough research to appraise the scope of this population nor to assess its particular needs.

In recent years, Israel has stepped forward in terms of its treatment of disabled people. On February 23, 1998, the **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law - 1998** was adopted by the Knesset, anchoring for the first time the right to equality and human dignity of people with disabilities and creating a new system of obligations for the State of Israel vis-a-vis its disabled citizens. The principal impetus for enactment of the **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law - 1998** was "The Report of the Public Committee to Review Comprehensive Legislation in the Matter of the Rights of People with Disabilities" (hereinafter the "Public Committee") which was submitted to the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Labor and Welfare in July 1997.

The **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law - 1998** came into effect on January 1, 1999. The Law eventually adopted was only part of the complete Bill. It includes basic principles, general principles, equality of employment, accessibility of public transportation and establishment of a commission on equal rights for people with disabilities. The remaining chapters of the Bill were re-tabled before the Knesset within the **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities** (Amendment - Accessibility, Health, Community Housing and Personal Assistance, Culture, Leisure and Sport, Schooling and Education, the Legal System, Special Needs) **Bill - 1999**, which has passed first reading in March 2000.

On August 1, 2000 the establishment of the Commission for Equal Rights for People with Disabilities was formally declared and is presently in its formative stages. Nevertheless, although two years have elapsed since the entry of the **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law - 1998** into effect, the majority of its provisions have not yet been implemented. One of the tasks put to the Commission is the particular promotion of women with disabilities, as it became clear in recent years that they suffer distinct problems and impediments in all areas of life. Thus, for example, according to the Commission, women with disabilities are subject to severe discrimination in the area of access to health services in general and in particular in the area of gynecological care. Apparently however, not only their particular needs remain unanswered, these needs and concerns are in general not even known to the relevant authorities.

In terms of non-governmental activities, within an NGO established in the early 90s called "B'Zchut" (with right, or entitlement) to protect and promote the status and rights of people with disabilities, a women's forum has been convened several times in recent years. Its aim was to focus attention to the status of women with disabilities, and it tried to advance the establishment of special health clinics to cater for women with disabilities, in cooperation with the Minister of Health Advisor on Women's Health. Unfortunately, the initiative did not come through and the forum was dismantled.

3.2. General Economic and Personal Situation

As a welfare state, Israel provides for subsistence means to all its residents, particularly to weak population groups who cannot earn a living, including the elderly, the unemployed, and the disabled. Accordingly, a chapter was added to the **National Insurance Law** in 1970, providing for minimal subsistence to anyone who due to physical, mental or emotional disability cannot earn a living, or whose earning capacity was cut down by 50% or more, and is not covered by any other law that provides for disability pensions. Since 1977, women who are home-makers were added to those eligible to disability pensions according to this law, even though they are exempt from social security payments (as explained in the previous Report). Israel is one of the few countries worldwide which grants this pension to home-makers.

In terms of subsistence support, there are three main categories of disabled people, in line with the source and type of their support: IDF (Israel Defense Force) disability pension, employment disability pension, and general social security disability pension. There are more men than women in all categories. The men's rate is particularly much higher among the IDF disability pension recipients and the employment disability pension recipients: women make up between 5%-7% and less than 10% of these two groups respectively. In late 2000 a

Women's Forum Within the Army (IDF) Disabled Veterans Organization was established, aiming to re-examine the rights and benefits awarded to women disabled veterans and to act as their support group.

While women's rate could be expected to exceed the men's rate within the category of the general social security disability pension recipients, they still make up less than half of those getting the general disability pension, due to a higher standard of disability which is required from women who are home-makers to be eligible for the pension. Women who are home-makers (as explained in the previous Report, only women can be classified as home-makers according to the National Insurance Law) have to prove a 50% medical disability, while others have to prove only 40% in order to be eligible for the pension.

With respect to general disability pension recipients, in 1997 they made up 3% of the adult female population (between 18-60) and 3.9% of the adult male population (between 18-65). Among this group of pension recipients, the rate of married women was lower than that of married men: 49% and 54% respectively. Moreover, 14% of the women were divorced or separated, compared to only 9% of the men. Within the general population of disabled people it is estimated that over half of the women with disabilities do not get married, and 17% are divorced or separated.

3.3. Special Health Concerns of Women with Disabilities

The family plays a very important role in the life of disabled women, as in the life of any other woman. However, what is taken as obvious for any woman may present immense difficulties for a woman with a disability. Gynecological services, delivery rooms, preventive medicine procedures such as mammography examinations are generally not equipped to fit the special requirements of women with disabilities. There is no separate discussion of examination and treatment of women with disabilities within the general education and training syllabus of gynecologists. There are very few special gynecological examination beds nation-wide, and disabled women report difficulties in receiving appropriate treatment. Special impediments are encountered by disabled women in relation to fertility treatments. Efforts by activists and NGOs have been going on for several years to promote the establishment of a special health clinic for women with disabilities. It is hoped that the establishment of the Commission will promote this initiative.

3.4. Employment

The majority of people with disabilities are not being employed and most of them have never held steady jobs. In a survey conducted by the Service for the Blind of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare it was found that the rate of unemployment of blind persons was 72% (March 1997). The estimate of the Rehabilitation Department of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare with respect to the rate of unemployment among people with severe disabilities, physical illness, mental illnesses and retardation is 70%-75%. In a needs survey (1992), unemployment levels among deaf people aged 30-64 were found to be at 18%-22%. It is estimated that the situation of women is even worse.

The **Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law - 1998** regulates the right of people with disabilities to employment equality in a central chapter: section 8 of the Law prescribes a prohibition on discrimination in employment on the grounds of disability, including an obligation to make reasonable accommodations. These accommodations include: ramps, elevators and flexibility in arrival and departure of the disabled to and from work, translation into Braille writing, and more. Pursuant to the Law, the Minister of Labor and Welfare and the Minister of Finance are charged with the enactment of regulations to determine State participation in financing the accommodations; regulations have not yet been enacted. Section 9 of the Law prescribes, as a transitional provision for seven years, the duty of a person who employs more than 25 employees to ensure adequate representation of people with disabilities, and in addition section 28 of the Law contains an indirect amendment of the **State**

Service (Appointments) Law - 1959 with respect to the duty of adequate representation of people with disabilities in the State Service.

Article 15

Equality before the Law and in Civil Matters

The Committee has requested the Government of Israel to address the issue of gender sensitization of the judiciary. The research on gender bias within the Israeli court system that was conducted in the mid 90s was described in the previous Report. Following the publication of the research as a book in 2000, several conferences took place, and its results are currently being studied within the judicial system. According to Justice Orr, the Head of the Institute for Judges' Seminars, the subject of gender bias is on the Institute's agenda, and is to be included within the coming year's (2001-02) program, either as a subject in itself or as part of a broader seminar.

Article 16
Equality in Marriage and Family Life

1. Introduction

In view of Israel's constitutional system and its respect for religious pluralism as well as its recognition of the autonomy of recognized religious communities in matters of personal status, Upon ratifying the convention, Israel entered a reservation to article 16 insofar as the laws of personal status binding on the several religious communities in Israel do not conform with the provisions of this Article. In addition, Israel entered a reservation with regards to Article 7(b) of the convention, concerning the appointment of women as judges of religious courts, where such appointment is prohibited by the laws of any of the religious communities in Israel.

Having reviewed these reservations, in light of General recommendation no. 4 of the CEDAW Committee adopted in 1987, and its reporting guidelines on this matter, Israel maintains that it is unlikely that the circumstances in the foreseeable future will permit any change.

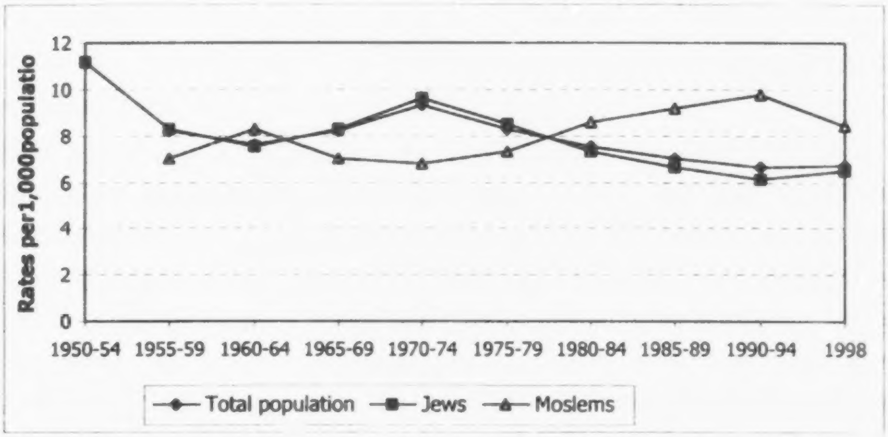
2. The Family in Israel: Some Demographic Data

As already mentioned in the previous Report, Israel is very much a family-oriented society. A 1999 study of familism and family-perceptions in Israeli society ranks Israel first among 21 post-industrial states in which, like Israel, women's educational level and workforce participation have significantly increased in the last 20 years. Relative to the other states in the study, marriage rates in Israel remain high, divorce rates are low, and birth rates are significantly higher (Fogiel- Bijaoui 1999, 130- 134).

2.1. Marriages

The familial characteristic of Israeli society is reflected in the following chart and table, detailing marriage rates, marital status and percentages of non-married and never-married men and women in different age groups.

Chart 1 - Marriage Rates, by Religion, Various Years



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Table 1 - Population Aged 15 and over, by Religion, Marital Status and Age, Average 1997

Age Group	Males					Females				
	Total	Never Married	Ever Married	% Never Married	% Non-Married	Total	Never Married	Ever Married	% Never Married	% Non-Married
	Thousands					Thousands				
	Jews									
Total	1650.9	543.7	1003.2	32.9	39.2	1771.9	448.3	1323.6	25.3	43.8
15-19	203.9	203.2	0.7	99.7	99.7	193.5	189.7	3.8	98.0	98.1
20-24	199.8	179.7	19.5	89.9	90.2	191.5	140.2	51.3	73.2	74.5
25-29	166.9	86.1	77.8	51.6	53.4	166.1	50.9	115.2	30.6	35.3
30-34	142.4	29.8	107.0	20.9	24.8	146.9	18.2	128.7	12.4	20.3
35-39	144.1	15.1	121.6	10.5	15.6	153.0	11.8	141.2	7.7	18.2
40-44	149.2	9.8	130.4	6.6	12.6	159.1	9.9	149.2	6.2	19.0
45-49	148.5	6.2	132.1	4.2	11.0	157.4	8.5	149.0	5.4	20.4
50-54	105.4	3.5	93.9	3.3	10.9	111.7	5.3	106.4	4.7	22.6
55-64	160.8	4.4	141.5	2.8	12.0	185.0	5.9	179.0	3.2	29.4
65+	230.0	5.8	178.7	2.5	22.3	307.7	7.9	229.7	2.6	60.1
	Moslems									
Total	248.7	97.8	150.8	39.3	40.7	241.5	75.3	166.2	31.2	38.6
15-19	45.8	45.3	0.5	99.0	99.0	43.8	37.3	6.5	85.2	85.4
20-24	43.7	33.8	9.9	77.3	77.7	41.9	17.8	24.1	42.5	44.0
25-29	36.8	12.8	24	34.8	35.7	35.4	7.9	27.4	22.5	24.3
30-34	31.9	3.4	28.4	10.8	11.9	30.4	4.9	25.4	16.3	19.0
35-39	24.7	1.1	23.5	4.6	5.8	23.5	3	20.5	12.6	16.8
40-44	17.8	0.4	17.4	2.5	3.6	17.5	1.6	15.9	9.2	15.7
45-49	12.3	0.2	12.1	1.9	3.3	12.6	0.9	11.7	7.4	17.3
50-54	11.3	0.2	11.1	1.8	3.5	11	0.7	10.3	6.2	20.6
55+	24.4	0.5	23.9	1.9	8.1	25.7	1.2	24.5	4.6	46.7

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

When the rates of never-married people are examined separately, it is evident that throughout the different population groups, as Israelis grow older, those who never get married find themselves in increasing minority.

Another indication of the centrality of family-life in Israeli society is the relatively low marriage age, especially that of women, compared to other Western societies. The overall trend in all population groups is the rising of marriage ages for both women and men, while the gaps in the average and median ages of women as compared to those of men, in all population groups, remain more or less unchanging.

Table 2 - Median and Average Marriage Age, Various Years

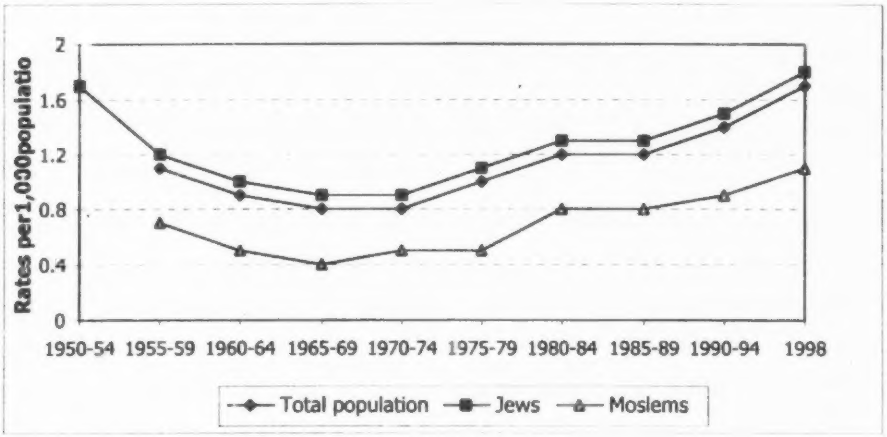
	Men							
	Jews		**Moslems**		**Christians**		**Druze**	
Year	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
1960	29.1	25.7						
1970	27.1	24.4	25.4	24.3	28.6	27.5	23.9	22.7
1980	27.3	25.3	24.9	23.7	28.5	27.4	22.6	21.6
1985	28	26.2	25.2	23.9	28.9	27.5	23.6	22.3
1990	28.3	26.5	25.6	24.6	29	27.6	25.7	24.4
1994	28.1	26.5	25.8	24.7	29.5	28.2	26.5	24.4
1997	28.8	26.9	26.3	25	29.1	28	26	24.9
1998	28.5	27	26.3	25.1	29.3	28.1	25.9	25.1
	Women							
	Jews		**Moslems**		**Christians**		**Druze**	
Year	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
1960	24.6	21.7						
1970	23.6	21.6	20.4	19.4	22.4	21.5	19.7	19
1980	24.1	22.3	20.5	19.5	22.3	21.5	18.9	18.2
1985	24.6	23	20.9	19.8	23.7	22.4	19.8	18.6
1990	25	23.5	21.2	20.1	23.6	22.6	20.3	19.1
1994	25.1	23.8	21.3	20.1	23.9	22.5	20.8	19.7
1997	25.8	24.2	21.6	20.3	23.5	22.7	21.3	20.2
1998	25.5	24.4	21.6	20.3	23.7	23	21.2	20.3

Source Central Bureau of Statistics *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

2.2. Divorces

Divorce rates have been increasing both among Jewish and Arabs in recent years. Still, they remain low relative to other post-industrial countries.

Chart 2 - Divorce Rates, by Religion, Various Years



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

Table 3 - Persons Divorcing, by Religion and Age, Various Years

Age	1998		Husbands				Wives			
	Husbands	Wives	1983	1993	1994	1997	1983	1993	1994	1997
	Absolute Numbers		**Rates (per 1,000 married men and women in all age groups)**							
Jews										
15+ Total	8,714	8,714								
15-49	7,065	7,690	8.5	9.7	10.5	10.4	8	9.4	10.2	10.7
Up to 19	12	97		18	14.3	21.9	15.9	20.9	17.1	22.6
20-24	375	983	14.9	13.8	15.7	18.2	13.5	14	16.4	17.6
25-29	1,270	1,710	10.7	12.4	13.5	13.7	10.2	12	13.2	13.8
30-34	1,511	1,425	9.2	11.6	12.4	11.3	7.7	10	10.5	11.3
35-39	1,397	1,326	7.6	9	10.2	9.9	7	8.3	9.5	10.1
40-44	1,367	1,166	7.2	8.2	9.1	8.6	5.1	7.3	8.4	8.7
45-49	1,133	983	5.3	7.8	7.7	7.9	4	7	6.6	6.9
50-54	769	507	3.5	5.9	7.1	6.4	2.2	*	5.6	5.6
55+ **	784	425								
Moslems										
15+ Total	1,070	1,070								
15-49	973	1,020	6.9	5.9	6.5	7.6	6.4	5.3	5.9	7.4
Up to 19	17	147	25	15.8	15.8	39.9	22.1	12.5	15.3	20.2
20-24	241	389	20.6	16.1	17.6	20.6	10.6	9.8	10.5	14
25-29	315	205	7.5	7.6	8.8	11.5	5.9	4.9	5.5	6.8
30-34	184	117	5.8	4.3	4.8	6	4	4.2	4.3	4.9
35-39	134	91	3.6	3.9	3.5	4.8	2.3	2.8	3.1	4.2
40-44	55	45	3.8	3.4	4.1	3.7	3	2.1	2.2	3.7
45-49	27	26	1.4	2.3	2.5	2.9	2.4	1.2	2.3	2.9
50-54	40	14	2.2	1.4	2.5	3.3	2.4	1.6	1.8	2.4
55+ **	40	18								

* Published data is 38.8, however our impression is that this is a mistake.

** Due to problems in updating figures on marital status of population aged 55 and above, rates for persons divorcing at these ages are not available.

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

It should be noted that the data above depicts only marriages that are listed by the official marriage and divorce registrars, namely only those that are conducted by the formally recognized religious organs, since there are no civil marriages and divorces in Israel.

3. Minimum Marital Age

Until 1998 no minimal marital age for men appeared in the Israeli legislation, as oppose to women, whose minimal marital age was set at 17. A 1998 amendment to **the Marriage Age Law-1950** has set a minimum marriage age for men at 17 too, and adapts the grounds for approval of under-age marriages (according to section 5 of the Law, as explained in the previous Report) accordingly.

The minimal age requirement is accompanied by provisions that make the arrangement of under-aged marriages a criminal offence. Despite the criminal sanctions, the phenomenon of minors' marriages has not been eliminated altogether, especially within the Moslem population, as the next table clearly shows:

Table 4 — Marriage of Young People up to Age 19, 1998

Absolute Numbers

Age	Jews	Moslems	Christians	Druze
Grooms				
Total	30,765	7,803	722	847
Total to age 19	816	374		51
Up to 17	32	12		
18	190	112		10
19	594	250		41
Brides				
Total	30,765	7,803	722	847
Total to age 19	3,336	3,607	127	393
Up to 16	60	64	4	
17	352	1,259	16	131
18	1,032	1,277	46	137
19	1,892	1,007	65	124

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2000*

The rate of approval of petitions to under-age marriages, according to section 5 of the Law (detailed in the previous Report), is extremely high, and stands at 75%. It must be noted, though, that the number of petitions brought to the court is a mere fraction of the actual number of minor marriages. Thus, between 1.1.97- 26.11.00, only 122 petitions for judicial permits to under-age married were brought to courts throughout the country. Of these, 89 were approved.

4. Same-Sex Couples

The broad approval of non-marital cohabitation in Israel, as discussed in the previous Report, has had an undeniable effect on the possibility of legal recognition of same-sex couples. This could be clearly seen in the most significant step thus far in that direction, namely the precedent setting *Danilovitch* case from the mid-90s, in which the El-Al Airline was ordered to award an air steward the same benefit in the form of a free ticket for his homosexual partner, as he would be awarded for a heterosexual partner, whether married or not. The *Danilovitch* holding can be understood in light of two developments within the Israeli legal system: first, a 1992 amendment to the **Equal Employment Opportunity Law- 1988**, which added sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for employment discrimination; and second, the widespread recognition of non-marital partnerships.

The most pertinent cases on this question are cases involving children of same-sex couples, which are mainly relevant to lesbian couples. This subject has risen in the late 90's, and several developments took place since then. The first one relates to equal access of lesbian women to the new reproductive technologies for purposes of raising a family. The procedures of Artificial Insemination and In Vitro Fertilization in Israel are regulated in the **Public Health (*In Vitro* Fertilization) Regulation- 1987** and in an administrative directive issue by the Director-General of the Ministry of Health. Both arrangements had limited single women's (including lesbians) access to the reproductive technologies, and demanded they undergo psychological or social-worker evaluation before being accepted to treatment. These regulations were challenged in 1997 by several women and a declared lesbian couple, claiming they were discriminated. The High Court of Justice accepted the appeal, declared the regulations to be void, and ordered the Ministry of Justice to publish an administrative directive mandating equal access to reproductive treatments. The CLAF lesbian organization (described in the previous Report) reports a growing use of these methods by lesbian couples.

The most recent legal victory in that direction has been the High Court of Justice's decision to register a lesbian partner of a biological mother as the child's second mother, based upon a prior adoption order issued in California. While the majority holding, which was comprised of two women justices, was careful to emphasize the narrow and almost technical basis of the decision, namely the lack of the registrar's discretion to refuse the registration according to a foreign adoption order, the social policy implications of the decision cannot be ignored. Still, the registration is only administrative and has no substantive validity, and legally the Court's decision does not entail the granting of substantive recognition of lesbian non-biological motherhood, nonetheless in granting the second mother registration the Court does declare that at least officially, if not legally, "this child does have two mothers".

A genuine substantive confrontation of the recognition of lesbian motherhood has taken place in one of the most prolonged legal battles in that direction, in which a lesbian couple who have been raising together three children born to each one of them through artificial insemination, have been pursuing legal recognition of their mutual parenthood over the children through a second-mother adoption order. During the course of their legal battle, Judge Yehudit Shtofmann, then Deputy President of Tel-Aviv and Center Family Court, has issued a guardian order for each woman over the biological children of her partner. On the other hand, their petition for joint second-parent adoptions was rejected by the Family Court, and at the time of writing, their appeal to the District Court was still pending.

Legal developments regarding same-sex couples have been taken place in the administrative area as well. Thus, for example, the ACRI (Association for Civil Rights in Israel) reported in 1998 that in response to a ACRI's petition, the Civil Service Commission had adopted a new policy regarding beneficiaries' rights, providing cohabitants of deceased civil servants with beneficiaries' rights regardless of their sex. Likewise, the Ministry of Interior had adopted a policy, that is equivalent to its policy towards heterosexual non-marital cohabitants, awarding homosexual foreign partners of Israeli citizens with residents status.

5. Parents and Children

5.1. Child Support

Several Supreme Court cases in recent years have raised the age of obligatory child support until the child finishes military service. The scope of the obligation, though, is to be about a third of the scope of the obligation toward children under 18.

6. New Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy

As discussed in the previous Report, Israel has become the first state to positively sanction and regulate surrogacy, as legislated in the **Surrogate Motherhood Agreements (Approval of Agreement and Status of Newborn) -1996**.

As of October 2000, 78 surrogacy agreements were approved, resulting with the birth of 26 children in 19 childbirths (due to the prevalence of twins). Two other surrogate mothers are currently pregnant. 25 couples whose agreements had been approved terminated the process midway, or completed the surrogacy process which did not result in a pregnancy. Two of the prospective parents gave births to children unaided by a surrogate after the approval of their surrogacy agreements.

7. Personal Status of Arab Women

As mentioned above, the **Marriage Age Law-1950** prohibits marriages under the age of 17. According to the National Council of the Child, 33% of Arab women aged 17-18 are married. This rate compliments data shown in Table 5 above, according to which the number of Arab women who are known to be married under the age of 17 and even 16 is quite large. However, during the years 1990-96, only 16 complaints of underage marriages were registered in all the police departments in Israel. 13 of these cases were closed.

As discussed in the previous Report, bigamy is considered a felony, punishable by up to 5 years in prison, under the **Penal Code - 1977**. Despite this, according to a 1999 HRA (Arab Association for Human Rights (NGO)) survey in the Negev, 40% of Arab Bedouin women surveyed answered that they live in polygamous marriages.